

June 08, 2012

Dear Representative:

We, the undersigned, organizations that support the health and rights of immigrant women, write to express our strong opposition to a provision included in H.R. 5855, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act. This provision, included in Sections 566, 567, and 568 and known as the Aderholt Amendment, purports to ban coverage of abortion for women in immigration detention custody. In reality, the provision is a mean-spirited and unnecessary attack on health care access for immigrant women.

This provision does more than simply duplicate existing bad policy—it is a cruel, politicized attack on some of the most vulnerable women in our society. Advocates and policymakers have been working together to improve humanitarian conditions for women in detention, by setting basic standards for health care and starting to address the epidemic of sexual violence. This amendment would take us backwards, making life harder for women in federal immigration custody.

We urge you to speak out against unfair and unnecessary restrictions on access to reproductive health care, including this provision. Women in detention are separated from their children, their partners, and their health care providers. They have been denied HIV medication, forced to give birth in shackles, and sexually assaulted by guards. This amendment, and any restriction on access to reproductive health care, is yet **another insult and humiliation for women who are already facing terrible circumstances.** Immigrant women's health should never be used as a political bargaining chip.

Should you have any questions about this or other legislation, please do not hesitate to contact Kimberly Inez McGuire, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health at (202) 621-1409 or via email at Kimberly@latinainstitute.org.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Youth
American Association for University Women
American Medical Student Association
Artemis Justice Center
ASISTA Immigration Assistance
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
Black Women's Health Imperative
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
Casa Latina
Catholics for Choice
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Women Policy Studies
Civil Liberties and Public Policy
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)
Commission on the Public's Health System
Empire Justice Center
Families for Freedom
Guam Communications Network
Hutto Visitation Program
Immigration Justice Clinic, Pace University School of Law
Jewish Women International

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance (MIRA)
Nana's Wish
National Abortion Federation
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Council of Jewish Women
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
National Health Law Program (NHeLP)
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
National Organization for Women
National Women's Health Network
NC Immigrant Rights Project
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health
Population and Development Program
Refugio del Rio Grande
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Institute
Reproductive Health Technologies Project
Texans United for Families
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Women's Law Project
Women's Refugee Commission
WV FREE