

Give Military Women the Health Care Coverage They Deserve

Under current law, women in the military who are survivors of rape and incest are denied coverage for abortion care. This coverage is less than the coverage provided to other women who rely on the federal government for health insurance. Military women sacrifice for our country every day -- we should not thank them by giving them less health care coverage than those they are serving to protect. The ban on health care coverage for abortion care in case of rape and incest should be lifted immediately.

Women in the Military Who Are Survivors of Sexual Violence Do Not Get Coverage for Abortion Services

- Current law bans Department of Defense funding of abortion except in the case of life endangerment. This ban means that military women and their family members who receive their health insurance from the Department of Defense and find themselves survivors of rape or incest will not receive any coverage for abortion care.

Women in the Military Are Not Receiving the Same Coverage as Civilians Who Receive Health Insurance Coverage from the Federal Government

- The coverage for military women is less than the coverage provided to civilians who also receive health insurance through the federal government, including the Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan, Medicaid and Medicare, where coverage for abortion care is provided in the case of rape and incest, as well as life endangerment. Although any restriction on coverage of abortion care harms women's health, the disparity in coverage for women in the military versus their civilian counterparts is *inexcusable* and should be fixed *immediately*.

Sexual Violence Happens in the Military Context Just As It Does in the Civilian Context

- Nothing about service in the military suggests that servicewomen who are survivors of rape and incest should be treated differently from civilian survivors of rape and incest. Indeed, the Department of Defense reported that there were *over 3,000* reported sexual assaults involving service members in the fiscal year 2011.¹ Servicewomen subjected to such violence should at least get the same level of care and coverage as their civilian counterparts. Any argument to the contrary is insulting to the sacrifices that servicewomen make every day to serve our country.

¹Fact Sheet: Department of Defense Annual Report On Sexual Assault In the Military, Fiscal Year 2011 (April 13, 2012), available at: <http://www.defense.gov/news/sexualassaultannualreportfactsheet.pdf>.