

July 23, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Collins and Cole, Vice Chair Murray, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

The undersigned organizations write to oppose riders in the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Defense and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies (MilCon-VA) appropriations packages that attack abortion access. Our budget bills should be funding critical programs that expand health care access for the American people – not stripping it away. All of us, including our military service members, veterans, and their loved ones, deserve access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care, including abortion.

The House-proposed FY27 Defense appropriations bill contains a provision that bans the Department of Defense (DOD) from providing travel and transportation funds to service members and dependents who need to travel for abortion care. This language is both redundant – Secretary Pete Hegseth has already rescinded the policy providing for such funds – and reinforces the military's deeply harmful abortion bans. Under federal law, military families are already subject to abortion bans at Military Treatment Facilities and under TRICARE with only limited exceptions for rape, incest, or to save the life of the pregnant person. As a result, service members are forced to travel off base to access abortion care and must pay for their care out of pocket. In post-*Dobbs* America, where abortion is banned in thirteen states and severely restricted in many others, service members, who have little to no control over where they are stationed, must sometimes travel hundreds of miles and across state lines to receive this essential health care. The Defense bill also contains language banning funding to conduct or support research using “fetal tissue” obtained from an abortion. The real intent of this rider, which is also included in the House-proposed FY27 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill, is to stigmatize abortion care, block life-saving medical research, and advance an unpopular political agenda. Neither of these provisions do anything to protect service members' access to the health care they need or their well-being.

The House Appropriations FY27 MilCon-VA committee report also includes anti-abortion language stating that the House Committee on Appropriations “recognizes the final rule issued

by the Department [of Veterans Affairs]" instituting a near-total ban on abortion for veterans and their dependents. Not only does the report language rely on a flawed interpretation of the law, it wrongfully seeks to affirm a near-total abortion ban for our veterans without exceptions for survivors of sexual assault or veterans whose health would be endangered by pregnancy. The Committees have no place supporting draconian abortion bans in their bills or accompanying reports; those bans undermine abortion access even further for veterans and their loved ones.

Our policymakers have promised our military service members comprehensive health care during and after their service. But these provisions are a betrayal of that promise and an insult to service members and veterans who have put their lives on the line to protect the very freedoms they are now being denied.

We urge you to strip these riders out of the final appropriations packages without delay.

Sincerely,

ACCESS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

All* Above All

American Society Reproductive Medicine

Center for Reproductive Rights

CommonDefense.us

Guttmacher Institute

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America

Ibis Reproductive Health

Jewish Women International

Just Solutions

Minority Veterans of America

National Abortion Federation

National Center for Health Research

National Council of Jewish Women

National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association

National Network of Abortion Funds

National Partnership for Women & Families

National Women's Law Center Action Fund

Physicians for Reproductive Health

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Positive Women's Network-USA

Power to Decide

Reproductive Freedom for All

Sciencecorps

Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

SPARTA