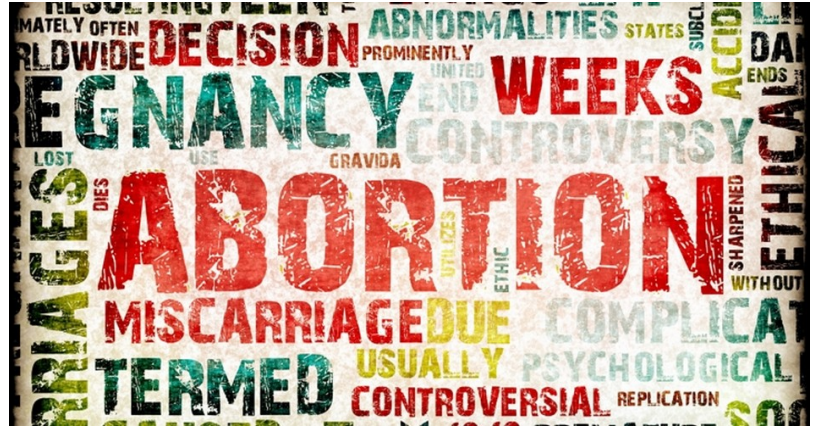




Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 20, 2019

House Dems Pass Spending Package Despite Inclusion of Hyde Amendment

On Wednesday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a Labor and Health and Human Services appropriations package that included the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits federal funding for abortions, with a vote of 226 to 203. But while the inclusion of the Hyde Amendment marks a small pro-life victory, some of the other pro-abortion provisions within the package cast a shadow on that triumph.



The \$1 trillion appropriations package funds the Departments of Defense, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and includes foreign aid. Wednesday's House vote garnered no votes from Republicans, and seven Democrats — Danny Heck of Washington, Ben McAdams of Utah, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, and Collin Peterson of Minnesota — voted against the measure, [according to the Daily Caller](#).

Democrats defended their passage of the appropriations package despite the inclusion of the Hyde Amendment by asserting that the funding measure also includes other provisions that would roll back some of the Trump administration's anti-abortion policies, *The Hill* reports. This includes the Mexico City policy, which prevents federal money from funding foreign nongovernmental groups that provide or promote abortions.

Under the Mexico City policy, the Trump administration defunded Planned Parenthood's international arm of approximately \$100 million, Life News reports. It also took American taxpayer dollars away from British abortion chain Marie Stopes International.

The package also includes a measure to stop the administration from implementing changes to a federal family planning grant program that would have prevented federal funds from going to facilities that provide abortions, such as Planned Parenthood.

"We are standing up for women's health care by pushing back on the Trump-Pence administration's dangerous, dangerous attacks on family planning services, including abortion and contraception," said Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), chairwoman of the Appropriations subcommittee on labor and health and human services.

The Hyde Amendment, first passed in 1976, prohibits federal funding from subsidizing abortions unless the woman's life is in danger or the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. According to the American Center for Law and Justice, approximately 25 percent of abortions were funded by taxpayers between *Roe v. Wade* and 1980, the year the Amendment took effect.

Since its passage, the Hyde Amendment has continually been reauthorized as part of broader spending packages funding the government, with Democrats holding their nose and letting it pass in order to achieve their own agenda items.

In recent years, Democrats have renewed efforts to repeal the Hyde Amendment, with the Democratic



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National Committee including language that opposed the amendment in the 2016 platform. But opposing the Hyde Amendment would mean opposing federal funding and potentially shutting down the government, a position in which Democrats do not want to find themselves ahead of a presidential election.

Still, the inclusion of the Hyde Amendment in the appropriations package was made into a hotly contested issue by 2020 Democratic presidential candidates.

Bernie Sanders cried, "Abortion is a constitutional right ... we will repeal the Hyde Amendment."

Kirsten Gillibrand declared, "Reproductive rights are human rights, period."

Elizabeth Warren told reporters, "The Hyde Amendment should not be American law."

Kamala Harris added, "No woman's access to reproductive health care should be based on how much money she has."

Former Vice President Joe Biden supported the amendment until backlash from his fellow candidates prompted him to reverse his position.

"I make no apologies for my last position and I make no apologies for what I'm about to say," Biden said on Thursday at an event in Atlanta, defending his change of heart. "I can't justify leaving millions of women without access to the care they need and the ability to exercise their constitutionally protected right."

In defense of his position against the Hyde Amendment, Biden blamed Republicans for "denying health care to millions of the ... poorest and the most vulnerable Americans by refusing even Medicaid expansion." He used the opportunity to reiterate his campaign promise of new universal healthcare that would "provide for the full range of health services that women need," with the "continued expansion of Medicaid and a public option of a Medicare plan."

Democrats are hoping to kill the amendment with a standalone bill.

Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.), co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, told reporters last week that while the "vast majority of Democrats" were opposed to the Hyde Amendment, they need to "build more support" and are working to push for its repeal with Representative Barbara Lee's (D-Calif.) Each Woman Act, which would require public health-insurance programs, including Medicaid and Medicare, to pay for abortions.

Meanwhile, the appropriations package is not expected to pass the GOP-controlled U.S. Senate as it currently stands.

"This package has become a partisan vehicle, under-funding defense priorities, over-funding non-defense programs, carrying poison pills, and delaying action to address the crisis at our southern border," said Representative Kay Granger (R-Texas), the top Republican on the Appropriations Committee.

Other controversial measures found within the bill include preventing withdrawal from the 2015 Paris climate accord, funding research into causes of gun violence, and language that would block funds from being used to ban transgender individuals from serving in the military.



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