

House Dems Pass Spending Package Despite Inclusion of Hyde Amendment

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



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

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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