



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on June 6, 2019

Left Takes Aim at Biden for Opposing Taxpayer Funding of Abortion

Former Vice President Joe Biden is under assault from his rivals for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination and other erstwhile allies for backtracking on repealing the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits federal funding of abortion.

Questioned last month by an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) activist about whether he would support repeal of the Hyde Amendment, Biden [said](#), "Yes," later adding, "It can't stay."



Now, according to the [Associated Press](#), Biden's campaign claims he misunderstood the question, thinking the activist was referring to the Mexico City policy, which prohibits foreign aid to organizations that provide abortions. "The campaign said Biden supports ending the Mexico City rule but backs the Hyde Amendment for now," wrote the AP. "That would change, it said, 'if avenues for women to access their protected rights under *Roe v. Wade* are closed.'"

That seeming flip-flop touched off a firestorm of criticism from the Left, which has become totally committed not just to unrestricted abortion but also to taxpayer funding of it.

"The pushback marked the first significant instance in which virtually the entire crowded 2020 field united to critique Biden, who has emerged as an early Democratic front-runner," penned the AP.

New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, who has campaigned as an unapologetic feminist, tweeted "reproductive rights are human rights, period. They should be nonnegotiable for all Democrats." On Capitol Hill, California Sen. Kamala Harris told The Associated Press she was "absolutely opposed to the idea that a woman is not going to have an ability to exercise her choice based on how much money she's got."

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, during an MSNBC town hall in Indiana, said Biden was wrong to support the abortion funding restriction. "Women of means will still have access to abortions," Warren said. "Who won't will be poor women, will be working women, will be women who can't afford to take off three days from work."

Former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke said on CBS News that Biden was "absolutely wrong" on his stance on the Hyde Amendment. "I hope that Joe Biden rethinks his position," O'Rourke said. "Perhaps he doesn't have all the facts. Perhaps he doesn't understand who the Hyde Amendment huts [sic] the most."

Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), [tweeted](#): "There is #NoMiddleGround on women's rights. Abortion is a constitutional right. Under my Medicare for All plan, we will repeal the Hyde Amendment."

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Of course, as [Politico](#) pointed out, most of these lawmakers have themselves voted for the Hyde



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Amendment, sometimes repeatedly, because it is usually attached to large spending bills, and there's nothing Democrats enjoy more than spending taxpayers' money.

Non-candidates — among them Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.), Senator Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), and the leaders of Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America — also voiced their disapproval of Biden's position, which was until recently considered perfectly acceptable among Democrats, who only in 2016 wrote repeal of the Hyde Amendment into their party platform.

Biden isn't the sole Democrat to come under fire for being insufficiently pro-abortion. "The left flank of the Democratic Party is ramping up efforts to target and isolate pro-life Democrats," reported [Fox News](#).

Sanders, for instance, endorsed Marie Newman in her second bid to unseat longtime Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-Ill.), one of the few pro-life Democrats remaining in Washington. According to [BuzzFeed News](#), "Newman has made her pro-abortion rights stance central to her campaign against Lipinski," and Sanders cited her abortion position as one of his reasons for endorsing her.

Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards, a Democrat, came under withering attack last week for signing a bill that would prohibit abortions once a baby's heartbeat is detected.

[NBC News](#) noted:

"Gov. Edwards' decision is dangerous and we will fight it," said Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called the bill "heartbreaking." Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., labeled it "draconian," while Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., called his decision to sign it "outrageous."

NARAL political director Nicole Brener-Schmitz said in a [statement](#) that Edwards "won't get a pass just because he is a Democrat."

Abortion, including taxpayer funding of it, has become perhaps the prime litmus test for Democrats these days. Will it be enough to sink Biden — or will he flip-flop once more to save his skin?

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