

July 28, 2021

(202) 626-8820

RE: H.R. 4373 - State, Foreign Operations and H.R. 4505 - Commerce and Justice and Science Appropriations

Dear Representative:

The House is expected to vote on H.R. 4373, the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2022 and H.R. 4505, the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2022.

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) urges you to oppose H.R. 4373 and H.R. 4505, as they include several provisions that weaken or remove long-standing pro-life policies. NRLC will include the roll call on passage of H.R. 4373 and H.R. 4505 in its scorecard of key pro-life votes of the 117th Congress.

International Abortion Funding

Under the Trump Administration, a policy known as the **Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance program** was in effect. This vital pro-life policy, also referred to as the Mexico City Policy, was originally adopted by President Reagan and announced at a 1984 population conference in Mexico City. The policy was reinstated by President Bush in 2001 and restored and expanded under President Trump in 2017.

Under the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance program, in order to be eligible for U.S. “population assistance,” a private organization must sign a contract promising not to perform abortions (except to save the mother’s life or in cases of rape or incest), lobby to change the abortion laws of host countries, or otherwise “actively promote abortion as a method of family planning.”

The most important characteristic of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy is that it establishes an eligibility criterion for U.S. funding: If a group is unwilling to agree to avoid promotion of abortion, that group will not receive any type of U.S. support. In short, the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance Policy is not about how an organization keeps its books. Rather, it is about the type of groups the United States is going to support. If a specific organization declines to accept the policy, then the same funds are channeled to other organizations that agree to the contract. There is, therefore, no overall reduction in funding for family planning programs resulting from the Policy.

In late January of 2021, the Biden Administration again began permitting subsidies for organizations that promote abortion overseas. However due to the Helms Amendment, the direct use of the U.S. funds to perform abortion procedures remains unlawful. H.R. 4373 would

remove Helms, and permit the funding of abortion as a method of family planning as well as permit the coercion of anyone who does not wish to practice abortion or involuntary sterilization.

In addition, H.R. 4373 contains language that would create a statutory prohibition against a future Administration ever issuing a policy like Mexico City again.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Kemp-Kasten

H.R. 4373 increases funding for both the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and international family planning funding. Under the Trump Administration, UNFPA funding was redirected to other health programs because the Administration made a determination under the Kemp-Kasten provision to withhold funds from the UNFPA. Kemp-Kasten allows the President to discontinue funding to organizations that support or participate in the management of a coercive abortion program. In January 2021, President Biden issued a memorandum announcing that the U.S. will once again fund the UNFPA. H.R. 4372 weakens Kemp-Kasten.

Funding of Abortion by Bureau of Prisons

H.R. 4505, the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2022, removes the long-standing provision which bans the funding of abortions by the federal Bureau of Prisons, except where the life of the mother is endangered or in cases of rape. First enacted for FY1987, this provision has been in effect continuously since FY1996.

For the above reasons, the National Right to Life Committee urges you to oppose H.R. 4373 and H.R. 4505. NRLC will include the roll call on passage of H.R. 4373 and H.R. 4505 in its scorecard of key pro-life votes of the 117th Congress.

Should you have any questions, please contact us at (202) 378-8863, or via e-mail at jpopik@nrlc.org. Thank you for your consideration of NRLC's position on this important legislation

Sincerely,



Carol Tobias
President



David N. O'Steen, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Jennifer Popik, J.D.
Legislative Director