

October 2, 1995

The Honorable Christopher H. Smith
U.S. House of Representatives
2370 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Group letter sent
to Congress -
signed by NARAL,
NAF, & PPFA

Dear Representative Smith:

As organizations which support full access to safe, legal abortion services, we urge you to oppose H.R. 1833, legislation that would ban a particular type of abortion procedure, known to abortion providers as intact D&E or D&X. The technique has been sensationalized by anti-abortion advocates, who inaccurately refer to the surgery as a "partial birth" abortion -- a term unknown in the medical community, and invented solely for this legislation.

The bill directly challenges the fundamental right to choose established in *Roe v. Wade*, by selectively denying women the safest medical procedure for otherwise legal abortion, regardless of the health consequences to the woman.

This surgical procedure is used only in rare cases, fewer than 500 per year. It is most often performed in the case of wanted pregnancies gone tragically wrong, when a family learns late in pregnancy of severe fetal anomalies or a medical condition that threatens the pregnant woman's life or health. Restricting surgical options in these cases would only make tragic situations worse.

This surgical method has several advantages for the woman, the most important being that it is among the safest methods available in later pregnancy. It also permits more extensive pathological analysis, providing more complete information to geneticists trying to determine what may have caused a particular abnormality, and helping women find out if they can have healthy children in the future.

It is unprecedented, and inappropriate, for Congress to legislate the type of surgical procedure that a physician may or may not use in a particular case. Lawmakers and lobbyists have no place in the counseling room or the operating room. **We strongly encourage you to vote in opposition to H.R. 1833, in order to preserve a woman's ability to receive the best possible surgical care for her particular circumstances, and to determine that care in consultation with her physician.**

Sincerely,

Advocates for Youth

→ The Alan Guttmacher Institute
American Association of University Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American Humanist Association
American Jewish Committee
American Jewish Congress
Americans for Democratic Action
Americans for Religious Liberty

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
The Center for Reproductive Law and Policy
Center for Women's Policy Studies
Clara Bell Duvall Education Fund
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Disciples for Choice
The Feminist Majority
Holywood Women's Political Committee
Human Rights Campaign Fund
Institute for Research on Women's Health
International Projects Assistance Service
Medical Students for Choice
Michigan Welfare Rights League
→ National Abortion Federation
→ National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League
National Asian Women's Health Network
National Association of Nurse Practitioners
National Black Women's Health Project
National Center for the ProChoice Majority
National Council of Jewish Women
National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Organization for Women
National Republican Coalition for Choice
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center
NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund
People For the American Way Action Fund
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Action International
ProChoice Resource Center
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Society of Physicians for Reproductive Health and Choice
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
United Church Board for Homeland Ministries
Voters For Choice
Women of Reform Judaism, The Federation of Temple Sisterhood
Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press
Women's Law Project
Women's Legal Defense Fund
Women's Rabbinic Network
YWCA of the USA
Zero Population Growth