national RIGHT TO LIFE committee, inc.

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RE: Two NRL scorecard votes on amendments to Financial Services Appropriations bill (H.R. 3354)

Dear Member of Congress:

When the House of Representatives takes up the FY 2018 Financial Services Appropriations bill (H.R. 3354), we anticipate roll calls on two amendments that we expect to be included in the National Right to Life scorecard of key pro-life roll calls of the 115th Congress.

As reported by the Appropriations Committee, Section 817 of the bill includes language to make null and void the so-called "budget autonomy" law enacted by local officials of the District of Columbia. We urge you to vote against the Norton Amendment (no. 6) which would delete this crucial provision from the bill.

Article I of the U.S. Constitution provides that Congress shall "exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever" with respect to the seat of government, the federal District. Therefore, all legislative authority exercised by the District Council is authority delegated by Congress. In delegating certain limited authority to local officials in the Home Rule Act, Congress retained the requirement that all public funds spent by the District's local government must be appropriated by Congress. Yet, through adoption of the local law proclaiming so-called "budget autonomy," District officials are hijacking over $8 billion annually in funds that the Constitution and the Home Rule Act place under congressional authority, opening the door to use of these funds to pay for elective abortions or other illicit purposes.

Indeed, if Congress fails to assert its constitutional responsibility over the seat of government, we can expect more assaults by District authorities against pro-life and other conservative groups that are based in the District, such as we've already seen in the so-called "Reproductive Health Nondiscrimination Act" (RHNDA), a local law enacted by the District Council in 2014.

The RHNDA prohibits employers within the District from engaging in "discrimination" on the basis of "decisions" reached by employees, or potential employees, regarding "reproductive health" matters. It is not disputed that abortion is among the matters encompassed by the term "reproductive health" as used in the new law. The scope of the RHNDA is very broad, covering any "decisions" that are "*related* to the use . . . of a particular . . . medical service . . ." [emphasis added]

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) advocates for recognition that each unborn child is a member of the human family, and that each abortion stops a beating heart and ends the life of a developing human being. That viewpoint is shared by many women who once believed

otherwise and submitted to abortions, and by many men who once believed otherwise and were complicit in abortion; such persons number among the most committed activists within our organization and other pro-life organizations. Yet it would be intolerable for an advocacy organization such as ours to be required to hire, or prohibited from firing, a person who makes a "decision" to engage in advocacy or any other activity that is directly antithetical to our core mission to lawfully advocate for the civil rights of the unborn.

We urge you to vote in favor of the Palmer Amendment (no. 33) to curb implementation of the "Reproductive Health Nondiscrimination Act."

Thank you for your consideration of National Right to Life's positions on these two important matters.

Respectfully,

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