Template Op-Ed

Below is a template op-ed that should be personalized with your voice and opinion before submitting to a media outlet for consideration. Op-eds are usually 700-800 words in length but you should check the submission guidelines of the outlet to verify length requirements.

End the Global Gag Rule

Women have good reason to fear what Donald Trump will do to reproductive health care in the United States. He’s said there should be “some form of punishment” for women who have abortions. He’s signaled that he’s on board with plans to defund Planned Parenthood. He’s promised a Supreme Court Justice who will overturn Roe v. Wade “automatically.”

Although we at [INSERT COLLEGE] should be worried about what he’ll do to women’s health care here in [STATE], we should all be horrified by what he’s already done to reproductive health care and family planning services around the world.

Just days into his presidency, he imposed a radically-expanded version of the Global Gag Rule. This deeply cruel and dangerous policy cuts off funding to foreign health organizations that use their own money to do abortion-related work or advocacy. Its supporters claim they want to reduce the number of abortions, but report after report has found that the Global Gag Rule does the opposite. Under President Bush’s version of the Global Gag Rule, studies showed a steady increase in abortion in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Gag Rule hurts women and families. In countries like Ethiopia, which relies heavily on U.S. aid, unsafe abortion is the second leading cause of death for women of reproductive age. In Sub-Saharan Africa, where nearly 25 million people are living with HIV, condoms are an extremely important and effective way to prevent the spread of the disease. Cutting funding for organizations that provide access to birth control and safe abortion services will only worsen these problems.

This new version of the Global Gag Rule means millions more women – women with very few resources to begin with - will be unable to access even the most basic reproductive health care. The result of this policy will be more unwanted pregnancies, more women turning to unsafe abortion, and more women dying.

Studies show that when women can make their own family planning decisions their finances, health, and opportunities improve. Current U.S. funding for family planning services abroad has prevented more than two million abortions and averted 12,000 maternal deaths. Every $10 million cut to family planning support results in 39,000 more abortions and 200 more maternal deaths. If we want to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies and abortions, we should invest more, not less, into international family planning.
There are more than 225 million women around the world who want to prevent pregnancy but don’t have access to modern birth control. Filling the gap would decrease abortion rates and maternal deaths. It’s sad that so-called “pro-life” officials and activists aren’t demanding that rather than cheering policies to hurt girls, women and families around the world.

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