

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 4th, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20010

Dear Secretary Azar:

We write to strongly object to the recent announcement that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Civil Rights (OCR) plans to rescind federal funding from California based on its requirement that health insurers provide coverage for abortion care.

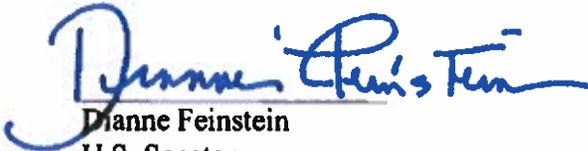
We are disappointed that, once again, the administration is choosing to restrict women's access to comprehensive reproductive care instead of allowing states to achieve the best possible health outcomes for women and families.

Indeed, penalizing California for its efforts to ensure women's access to comprehensive reproductive care runs counter to HHS' efforts to improve health outcomes and reduce health care costs. Several studies have shown that abortion restrictions are more likely to lead to health and safety risks for women, especially women of color. Research has also shown that women denied an abortion are more likely to experience economic insecurity lasting years, leaving them at much greater risk for adverse health outcomes.

California's abortion coverage requirement is a commonsense way of ensuring women are empowered to make their own health care decisions. Notably, when California clarified that current law required all fully insured health plans to cover abortion services, every insurer in the state promptly complied. This is not unordinary. Absent political interference, the majority of private insurance plans cover abortion services.

Your administration's policy of penalizing states undermines women's ability to access health care and control their own bodies. We ask that you immediately reverse course and not penalize California for providing comprehensive health care coverage to women, including abortion services.

Sincerely,


Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator


Kamala D. Harris
U.S. Senator

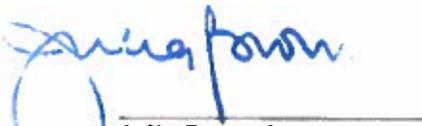

Judy Chu
Member of Congress


Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

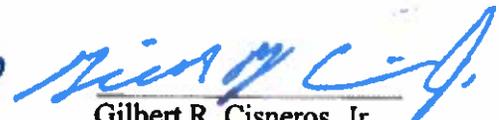

Nanette Barragán
Member of Congress


Karen Bass
Member of Congress


Ami Bera
Member of Congress


Julia Brownley
Member of Congress


Tony Cardenas
Member of Congress


Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress


Jim Costa
Member of Congress


Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress


Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

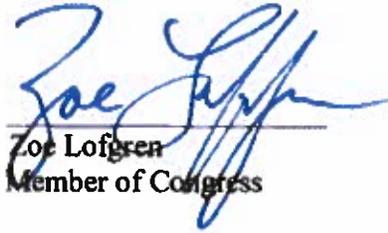

Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress


Jared Huffman
Member of Congress


Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



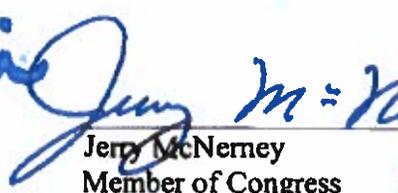
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



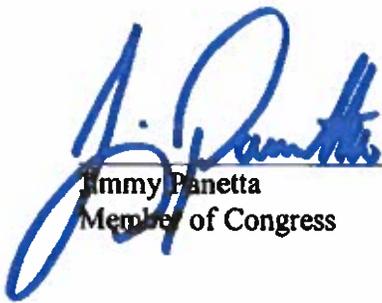
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



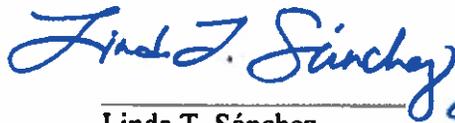
Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



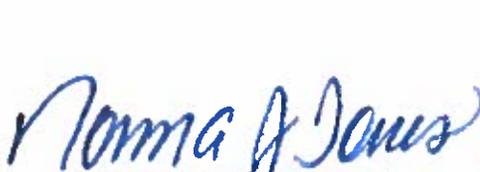
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Norma Torres
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress