

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 18, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Collins and Vice Chair Murray:

We write to urge you to keep the FY26 appropriations bills free of any new poison pill policy riders. Partisan, discriminatory, and harmful policy riders have no place in must-pass legislation such as appropriations bills. In the recent past, the Senate has had success passing bipartisan bills in committee because these bills did not contain new poison pill riders. Unfortunately, in FY26, the House has included more than 65 new anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQ+ riders in its appropriations bills, which we urge you to reject from any remaining final FY26 appropriations bills.

In the more than three years since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, our country has experienced a reproductive health care crisis. As of December 1, 2025, 13 states have banned abortion entirely, and 7 states have banned abortion anywhere from 6 to 18 weeks. Republicans have also attempted to ban medication abortion, which accounts for nearly two-thirds of all abortions in the United States. These bans leave 1 in 3 women, as well as transgender and nonbinary people, without access to abortion and disproportionately impact people of color, people with disabilities, young people, people living in rural areas, and people with low incomes.

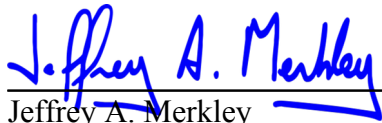
Despite the dangerous consequences of the bans and the overwhelming support for access to abortion, House Republicans have continued to propose extremist anti-abortion policy riders in their appropriations bills. These new riders include a measure to defund Planned Parenthood, a provision to codify the Trump administration's global gag rule, a provision that would interfere with essential postgraduate medical training in abortion care, and a provision that would restrict access to abortion and fertility care for servicemembers, veterans, and their families. If adopted, these provisions would dramatically undermine people's ability to make decisions about their bodies, lives, and futures and providers' ability to deliver necessary reproductive health care.

House Republicans have also used the FY26 appropriations process to push extremist and unpopular anti-LGBTQ+ measures, which threaten the lives and fundamental dignity of LGBTQ+ communities. Anti-LGBTQ+ legislation is being introduced across the country; in 2025 alone, more than 600 anti-LGBTQ+ bills have been introduced across 49 state legislatures.

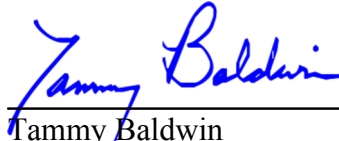
Against this backdrop, House Republicans have introduced more than 50 anti-LGBTQ+ provisions across all 12 appropriations bills. This includes provisions in almost every appropriations bill that would allow people and organizations, including those that receive taxpayer funds, to discriminate against LGBTQ+ people. More than half of the House's appropriations bills also contain dangerous riders that severely restrict access to gender-affirming care, which would deprive transgender people of critical, medically necessary, evidence-based, and often life-saving health care. Among those who would be impacted by these riders are the more than 134,000 transgender veterans who rely on the Veterans' Affairs Administration for their health care.

Dangerous poison pill provisions like those included in the FY26 House appropriations bills will severely undermine Congress' ability to push forward must-pass legislation and keep the government open and working for the American people. As such, we urge you to reject these extremist riders from the remaining final FY26 appropriations bills.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



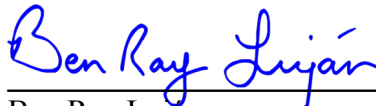
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



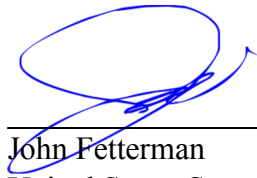
Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



John Fetterman
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



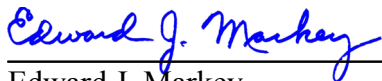
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



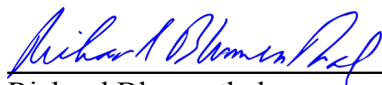
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



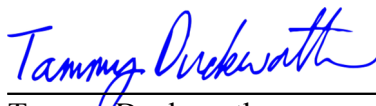
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



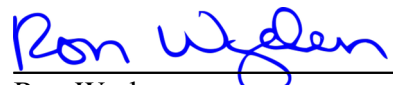
Ruben Gallego
United States Senator




Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



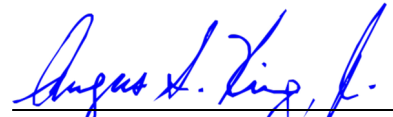
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



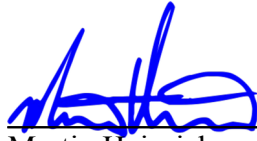
Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator




Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



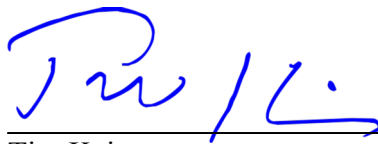
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
U.S. Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



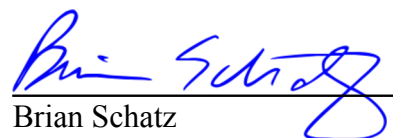
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



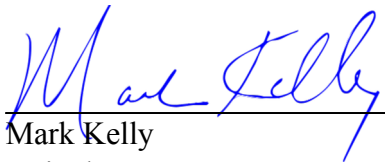
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator




Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator




Brian Schatz
United States Senator



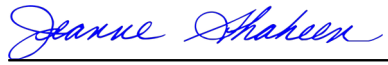
Mark Kelly
United States Senator




Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

CC:

The Honorable John Thune, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Senate Minority Leader