

**Memorandum**  
**Government Relations**

**To: National Organization for Women Board Members**

**From: Bonnie Grabenhofer, Vice President, and Jan Erickson, Government Relations Director**

**Date: February 17, 2017**

**SCOTUS NOMINEE IS RIGHT WING EXTREMIST**

**Trump Names ‘Originalist’ Neil Gorsuch to Replace Scalia on Supreme Court**

**Judge Neil Gorsuch** of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit is Donald Trump’s pick for the late **Justice Antonin Scalia’s** seat on the U.S. Supreme Court. This is the seat stolen by Senate Republicans when they refused to consider President Obama’s pick, **Merrick Garland**, Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, following the death of Scalia on February 13, 2016.

At the January 31 press conference announcing the appointment, Trump said, “Judge Gorsuch has a superb intellect, an unparalleled legal education, and a commitment to interpreting the Constitution according to its text.” The reference to originalist – as Gorsuch identifies his method of interpretation of the Constitution -- relates to the view that interpretation of a written constitution or law should be based on what reasonable persons living at the time of its adoption what have understood the ordinary meaning of the text to be. Justice Scalia was associated with this method of interpretation.

Born and raised in Colorado, Gorsuch, 49, attended Columbia University and Harvard Law School, and received a doctorate from Oxford University as a Marshall Scholar. He clerked for **Supreme Court Justices Byron White** and **Anthony Kennedy** on the Supreme Court. After a career in private practice, Gorsuch assumed the position of Principal Deputy Associate Attorney General in the Department of Justice and was nominated by **George W. Bush** for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, and was confirmed by a unanimous voice vote. He is married and has two daughters.

**House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi** issued a statement on January 31 about Judge Gorsuch which reads,

“After the relentless contempt for women that candidate Trump displayed throughout his campaign, it is no surprise that President Trump intends to place someone hostile to women’s rights on the Supreme Court. In the Hobby Lobby case, Judge Neil Gorsuch revealed his eagerness to single out women women’s health for discrimination and enable employers to meddle in their workers most intimate health decisions.

“Judge Gorsuch’s record reveals he holds radical views far outside the mainstream of American legal thought. The consequences of placing President Trump’s justice on the Supreme Court could not be more serious or far-reaching. House Democrats stand with the American people in demanding the toughest scrutiny of Judge Gorsuch before the Republican Senate holds any vote to send him to the highest court in the land.”

NOW has signed on to several letters to the Senate opposing Gorsuch’s nomination and will continue to take action to prevent his confirmation. His decisions in cases concerning immigration, women’s health, LGBTQIA rights, police misconduct, students with disabilities, money in politics, environmental protection, voting rights are troubling. His record clearly reveals a bias in favor of corporations and powerful institutions. More detailed information on Gorsuch will be provided in the next board report and on the NOW website. In the meantime, please consult the webpages of Alliance for Justice for a thorough analysis of his record, <http://www.afj.org/our-work/issues/supreme-court/nomination> Senate Judiciary Committee hearings begin March 20.

## **CABINET NOMINEES REPRESENT THE WORST OF CHOICES**

It’s been a breathtaking experience to learn more about the records of the various cabinet members selected by Donald Trump. It’s as though, his backers purposely selected candidates whose records reveal a hard core opposition to the missions and programs of the agencies they have been picked to lead. A prime choice in mind is **Betsy DeVos** who was named to be **Secretary of the Department of Education**. NOW opposed this nominee and many of you sent the Senate your messages of objection; these actions were joined by what amounted to be millions of messages, numerous rallies and countless Hill visits to oppose this truly unqualified nominee.

Here’s an excerpt the letter we sent to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee,

There is nothing in Ms. DeVos’s education, training or experience that indicates she is qualified for a position of leadership in what is one of our nation’s most important federal agencies – an agency whose primary mission is strengthening public education and assuring that all students are treated fairly and have access to a quality education.

Strong public support exists for locally controlled, accountable public schools which follow the law, and which strive to serve all students. Public education must remain the central concern for the Department of Education and its resources should not be diverted to for-profit private

schools or to vouchers for religiously-affiliated schools or for-profit online schools. Our organization believes that Ms. DeVos will use her position as secretary to undermine longstanding programs and policies on which states and local districts depend. And we fear that she will pursue her vision of using taxpayer money to promote schools which teach religious dogma and to attempt to move the nation's education system closer to sectarianism and privatization. Ms. DeVos is reported to have described her work as a way to "advance God's kingdom".

A billionaire, DeVos's activities have financed numerous organizations and campaigns that promote the privatization of education. Reportedly, Ms. DeVos has attacked political adversaries who do not support her efforts and deployed substantial funds through aggressive political action committees to pressure education policy-makers, spending millions to elect and lobby state legislators. She has also provided financial support to organizations that work to undermine protections for survivors of sexual harassment and sexual assault, including important protections for LGBTQ students.

DeVos and Donald Trump have said that they intend spend \$20 billion to promote adoption of vouchers; DeVos also refused during her hearing to commit to protecting Title IX campus sexual assault protections. For a time it looked like we could prevent DeVos' confirmation, but on February 7, the full Senate voted 50-50 to confirm with Vice President Mike Pence casting the tie-breaker vote. DeVos will have to be carefully monitored during her time at this important

### **Victory! Defeat for Andrew Puzder as Secretary of Labor**

Our letter of opposition to Andrew Puzder was submitted to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Several excerpt follow:

On behalf of the National Organization for Women (NOW), the largest grassroots feminist activist organization in the United States with hundreds of chapters in every state and the District of Columbia and hundreds of thousands of members and contributing supporters, we wish to state our strong opposition to the confirmation of Andrew Puzder as Secretary of the Department of Labor (DOL). Mr. Puzder is absolutely the wrong person to head this critically important department which affects the working lives of tens of millions of workers and their families.

Mr. Puzder favors policies that will be harmful to all workers, but especially harmful to low-wage workers who are disproportionately women. He opposes an increase in the federal minimum wage (two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women and women of color), opposes the \$15 wage for restaurant workers, opposes extending overtime pay, has criticized paid sick leave laws, is hostile to sex discrimination protections, is an outspoken critic of providing health insurance to employees and, astonishingly, is critical of rest and meal breaks for workers. For women workers who are striving to overcome systemic gender and gender/race -based pay discrimination, coping with sexual harassment and sexual assault in the workplace, and needing paid sick and family leave and child care assistance, Department of Labor support and advocacy is essential. Andrew Puzder's lack of respect for hard-working employees and opposition to protective labor policies that aid low-wage and women workers makes him particularly unacceptable.

Mr. Puzder's companies' extensive exploitation of his employees gives us every reason to believe that Andrew Puzder will undermine important protective Department of Labor policies and programs. According to a recent report by the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United,\* CKE restaurants has been the subject of multiple lawsuits for discriminating against workers and failing to pay overtime, and accused of firing workers for protesting against poverty wages.

Andrew Puzder's treatment of women is even more troubling. CKE's television advertisements – that Puzder bragged are representative of his personality – sexualize and objectify women in an effort to sell hamburgers. The objectifying culture created by the ads of “beautiful women eating burgers in bikinis” creates an equally objectifying work environment for Puzder's female employees, many of whom report instances of sexual harassment and assault, often from customers referencing the ads. The ROC report notes that sixty-six percent of women at CKE restaurants reported that they experienced unwanted sexual behaviors at work, compared to 40 percent of women in the fast food industry overall. Puzder has done little to protect his women employees from workplace harassment and violence; in fact, he has contributed to the hostile work environment these women face with his misogynistic leadership. The Secretary of Labor should seek to help empower women employees and to affirm their value and dignity, but Andrew Puzder's record provides no indication that he will do this.

Andrew Puzder's opposition to common sense labor policies, plus his willingness to exploit Carl's Jr.'s and Hardee's employees, should disqualify him from the position of Labor Secretary. While promoting sexual objectification and starvation wages for women, Puzder has made as much as \$10 million a year in total compensation, according to an analysis of recent data by the Institute for Policy Studies. Puzder received \$1.4 million in perks from 2009 to 2012.

The letter concluded that for all the listed reasons, Andrew Puzder should not be confirmed. At about the same time we submitted the letter to the Senate committee, a video tape of his first wife, **Lisa Fierstein**, recounting in detail on the **Oprah Winfrey Show** Puzder's domestic violence actions was released. NOW sent a quick action alert to our Leadership List and, hopefully many of you were able to contact your senators about this terrible candidate. Puzder withdrew his nomination on February 15.

The next NOW Government Relations Report will report on the man named to replace Andrew Puzder, Alexander Acosta, and other cabinet members and nominees, provide in-depth information on the record of Supreme Court justice nominee, Neil Gorsuch, and cover recent Trump administration actions.

## **REPUBLICANS PROMISE MASSIVE CUTS, REPEALS OF OBAMA ORDERS**

We are still riding a high from the **Women's March on Washington** and hoping that the new energy around women's and progressive issues will continue. Focused energy and millions more activists are certainly going to be needed to fight back against an array of repeals and budget cuts promised by the hard right Republican leadership of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress and the Trump administration. Our side is at a clear disadvantage. In the House, with **Rep. Paul Ryan** (R-Wis.) continuing as Speaker and **Rep. Nancy Pelosi** (D-Calif.) as Minority Leader, there are 241

Republicans and 194 Democrats, a change of six seats from the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress in favor of the Democrats. Not enough to stop bad legislation.

**Dark Money and Voter Suppression Hurt** - On the Senate side, there are 52 Republicans, 46 Democrats and two Independents. Unfortunately, the Democrats were not able take advantage of the 2016 cycle expected to favor the Democrats and to protect all their incumbents up for re-election and, at the same time, replace enough Republicans to regain the majority. Reason: the avalanche of money made possible by the **Supreme Court's** Citizens United 2010 decision, opening the floodgates for tens of millions of dollars in 'dark' money to flow into mostly Republicans' election campaigns. Another major factor was widespread voter suppression deployed by Republican operatives in key states when hundreds of thousands of voters were deterred through such tactics as photo ID requirements.

**Massive Cuts to Key Agencies, Programs** - At the outset, even before the inauguration, the Trump transition team met with career White House staff to plan for massive cuts to federal agencies. Their intention was to cut \$10.5 trillion in federal spending over ten years. The Trump team is using a blueprint prepared by the ultra-conservative Heritage Foundation and the Republican Study Committee, listing dozens agencies and programs suggested for elimination or budget reduction. <http://www.heritage.org/budget-and-spending/report/how-cut-343-billion-the-federal-budget>

**Budget Cuts Will Have Devastating Effect** - Among the scores of agencies and programs suggested for repeal or elimination are: Obamacare, Maternal and Child Health Block Grants, Title X Family Planning, Legal Services Corporation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Presidential Election Campaign Fund, U.S. Institute of Peace, Job Corps and a recommendation to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act. Also, the Heritage report recommended: reduce funding for Head Start and convert to vouchers, reduce Pell Grants to 2009 funding level, reduce funding for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division by 20 percent, privatizing the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, cutting the federal workforce by 20 percent and instituting a hiring freeze (which Trump has already done) and urged Congress to evaluate ways to cut spending under Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Not surprisingly, the budget-cutting recommendations do not touch Defense department spending

**Violence Against Women Act Funds Threatened** - NOW's VAW advisor, **Pat Reuss**, alerted us to this information: Several recent news articles reported that the **Heritage Foundation** recommended elimination of grants under the **Violence Against Women Act** (VAWA) and Trump's transition team is including this in their draft budget. If this action is taken, VAW programs for victims and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking would be devastated. According to a mid-January statement from the **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence** (NCADV), in the last fiscal year, programs, shelters, advocates, law enforcement, and many other public and non-profit entities received almost \$453 million in federal funds to combat gender-based violence. VAWA has been wildly successful –

gender-based violence has decreased by almost *two-thirds* since it was first passed in 1994 (with a great lobbying effort by Ms. Reuss, then head of the Washington office of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, and her large nationwide coalition of activists).

Also, to note: former NOW president, **Kim Gandy** – currently heading the **National Network to End Domestic Violence** (NNEDV), reminds activists that even at what some consider adequate funding levels, there remains a huge unmet demand for domestic violence services. NNEDV’s annual survey, a one-day snapshot, finds that about 12,000 requests for DV services go unmet due to a lack of funding and resources. Multiply that one day total out over a year and it is a staggering sum. Not to forget, an average of three women per day are murdered due to domestic violence. We simply cannot allow any reduction in federal funds to combat violence against women.

The NCADV statement also indicated that Title IX funds related to violence against women on campus may be in jeopardy as well.

**Tax Cuts Benefit Top One Percent** - An analysis of the likely FY '18 budget plan that looked at the plan that the Republican majority on the **House Budget Committee** approved of last spring and **Donald Trump**'s "Penny Plan" that he proposed during the campaign concludes that budget cuts of the magnitude proposed "would have devastating effect on tens of millions of less fortunate families and on an array of basic services that middle-income Americans as well rely on." **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities** director **Bob Greenstein**, writes that these budget cuts may come alongside deep tax cuts heavily favoring the most well-off. Reportedly, the Trump team is moving toward a **House GOP "Better Way"** tax plan that would *lose* \$3.1 trillion in revenue to the federal Treasury over the coming decade. Three quarters of the tax cuts would go to the top one percent of income-earners initially, with nearly *all* of the cuts favoring the top one percent at the end of the decade. (George W. Bush policies- *deja vue* all over again)

To read more about how much harm the cuts proposed for specific programs would pose to millions of moderate and low-income families, go to, <http://www.cbpp.org/federal-budget/commentary-signs-suggest-trump-budget-will-feature-unprecedented-cuts-plus-large-tax> and other analyses on that website.

**Tea Partier, Deficit Hawk to Lead OMB** - The Trump team will be meeting with career staff at the **Office of Budget and Management**, under the new director, Trump appointee, **Mick Mulvaney**, to map out the budget plan. Mulvaney, a deficit hawk and Tea Party member, represented South Carolina in the House for six years and was narrowly confirmed (51-49) on February 16. Mulvaney's leadership at this important agency could mean that the most extreme budget slashing plan will go forward.

**The Hard Right Agenda: Repealing the ACA and Other Horribles**

With Donald Trump in the White House and empowered by his outsized (and false) interpretation of the 2016 election results as a mandate for conservative action, Congressional Republicans are moving forward on an agenda of repealing nearly all of **President Obama's** initiatives, deeply cutting taxes for upper income earners, getting rid of numerous regulations claimed to hinder business or as unnecessary, slashing the budgets of human needs programs, allocating billions more to Defense programs, AND finally carrying out their long-standing promises to defund **Planned Parenthood** and repeal the **Affordable Care Act**.

According to the list of programs suggested by the right wing think tank, the **Heritage Foundation** and embraced by the Trump administration, for defunding in order to raise funds for infrastructure rebuilding. Long-standing GOP plans will likely go forward attacking **Medicare**, the senior health care insurance program, and **Medicaid**, an enormously important safety net for low-income persons and persons with disabilities. Trump has promised to safeguard Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security, but his new Secretary of Health and Human Services, **Dr. Tom Price**, as well as many hard-right, long-time opponents of those programs in the Republican party may undermine Trump. (NOW sent a letter to the **Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee** opposing the confirmation of Tom Price who is an opponent of the ACA, of abortion rights and has voted repeatedly to defund Planned Parenthood.) **House Speaker Paul Ryan** (R-Wis.) has been at work for several years building an argument for drastic reductions in human needs programs and is itching to move forward.

**Trump Issues Not-Yet Enforceable ACA Order** - On his first day in office, Donald Trump issued an **Executive Order (EO) that did not repeal the ACA** – as he had promised on the campaign trail – but gave a broad, and mostly unenforceable directive. The EO directed the **Department of Health and Human Services** and other agencies with ACA implementation responsibilities, stating “to the maximum extent permitted by law to exercise all authority and discretion available to them to waive, defer, grant exemptions from, or delay the implementation of any provision or requirement of the Act that would impose a fiscal burden on any state or a cost, fee, tax, penalty, or regulatory burden on individuals, families, healthcare providers, health insurers, patients, recipients of health care services, purchasers of health insurance or makers of medical devices, products and medications.” Carrying out this and other directives in the order would require a lengthy process of revising of regulations and, most likely, changes in the law itself.

**ACA Repeal: Uncertainty and Failed Ideas** - Speaker of the House, Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) is trying to fight back recent discussions among some Republicans that perhaps only parts of the ACA need to be changed. Additionally, it has increasingly become clear to GOP lawmakers that repeal without a replacement could amount to political suicide. News reports show hundreds of energized and more than a few angry private citizens showing up at town hall meetings of various members of Congress – either demanding that they repeal the ACA immediately or that they preserve the Affordable Care Act.

There are critical concerns with any fundamental overhaul of the Affordable Care Act: a primary one is that many current ACA beneficiaries will end up with less coverage and have more expensive plans, possibly losing some or all of their premium subsidies. It's clear now after three years of experience with increased coverage under thanks to subsidies and expanded Medicaid that millions of individuals and families just cannot afford health insurance without that help. Some 65 percent are receiving the subsidies.

Also, there is the fear that a transition to a new plan will be chaotic and cause considerable disruption to both health consumers and providers and, in the end, may create many unintended and harmful consequences. For women, a Republican overhaul may mean the loss of the **Women's Preventive Services** that are mandated under the ACA marketplace and other plans which are to be provided free of co-pays. The preventive services package includes well-woman visits, screening for gestational diabetes, HPV testing and counseling for other sexually-transmitted infections, contraceptive methods and counseling, counseling for domestic violence and other services. Free preventive services for children and men are also provided under the ACA.

Importantly, would a Republican overhaul of the ACA eliminate the prohibition against **gender-rating** (or provide a way around that) in health care plans where women used to charged more than men for the same services and would an overhaul eliminate the mandate for maternity coverage? Equally important, would we lose the contraceptive coverage mandate that has benefitted so many women? The **Guttmacher Institute** reports that 55 million women of reproductive age have benefitted, under both Obamacare and in private plans that were also mandates to provide no cost-sharing birth control insurance coverage.

<https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2017/01/what-stake-federal-contraceptive-coverage-guarantee>

Donald Trump and other GOP lawmakers say that they want to maintain the popular parts of the ACA, such as a requirement to provide coverage to persons with pre-existing conditions and insurance coverage for children up to age 26 on their parents' plans. But the problem is that much of what the Affordable Care Act accomplishes is inter-connected and maintaining several 'popular' elements while doing away with other parts would cause the entire plan to collapse. Doing away with the individual mandate; that is, everyone must have health insurance, would result in a health insurance program that does not work at all. Younger, healthier persons are essential to help pay for the higher costs of persons who have more extensive health care needs.

Of the proposals for replacing part or all of the ACA, nearly all have been shown to be unworkable and fall short of what the ACA does. Among those advanced are: allowing sale of health insurance across state lines, high-risk pools, Health Savings Accounts, Continuous coverage protections, Provide non-income based refundable tax credits, Deduct health insurance costs from taxes, End the individual mandate, Block grant Medicare to the states, and Capping Medicaid payment to the states based on population (per capita caps). Here's what **Families USA** has to say about several of the proposals, <http://familiesusa.org/product/republicans-aca->



[replacement-proposals-fall-short-providing-protections-and-care-people](#) Families USA says that, “congressional Republicans are rushing down a dangerous path that could take health coverage away from 30 million people and raise premiums for millions more.”

**First Steps Toward ACA Repeal** - On January 12, the Senate voted in favor of a budget blueprint that would allow them to repeal the ACA without threat of a Democratic filibuster. Essentially, that would be putting the ACA repeal to a vote under the **Congressional Review Act** (CRA) that limits amendments and requires only a simple majority vote. The January vote to approve of this course of action was 51-48. The budget blueprint instructs House and Senate committees to draft repeal legislation by January 27 – that date has come and gone and we have yet to see their draft legislation.

At that time, **Sen. Bernie Sanders** (I-Vt.) offered an amendment that would prevent any legislation that cuts Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid – but it failed 49-49 (60 votes were needed to consider the amendment in its merits). **Sen. Mazie Hirono** (D-Hi.) offered a similar amendment that would have prevented cuts to Medicare or Medicaid, but it too went down (49 yays and 47 nays). So there’s hope that we may be able to stop efforts down the road to cut these vital programs.

Even though the **National Organization for Women** did not fully support the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act as it was being considered in 2009-2010 (and we were particularly appalled that the legislation was used as a vehicle to further narrow access to abortion care), overall the fact that many millions of persons otherwise unable to access affordable insurance are now able to do so. And, this access is especially important for women of child-bearing age and for women of color who were disproportionately harmed by the high cost of insurance and often went without needed health care services. Needless to say, we are gratified that the more than 45,000 persons per year that were estimated by **Harvard University** researchers to lose their lives because they lacked health care insurance and were unable to pay for needed health care services or medicines.

NOW adopted a position in the early 1990s in favor of **single-payer health care** much like the systems in **Canada** and the **U.K.** – and which President Obama said in the early days of the health care reform debate that he preferred a single-payer plan – but it appeared impossible to get such a plan passed due to Republican opposition. (Read more about a single-payer plan at <http://www.pnhp.org/> ) Single-payer is similar traditional Medicare and there is support in the progressive community for “Medicare for All” – as Sen. Bernie Sanders’ advocated for on the campaign trail

Stay tuned.

**The Other Horribles**

It's been a fast roller coaster ride during the first few weeks of the Trump presidency and the beginning of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. One of the major objectives of both the administration and the GOP-controlled Congress is to repeal all – or nearly all – of the Executive Orders and certain other executive actions of President Obama. Here's a partial rundown:

**Taking Down Government Website Information** – a common activity when administrations have switched political parties is to remove from many of the agency websites information with which the new administration does not agree or want the public to see. A good example comes from the George W. Bush administration when information placed on the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau was removed and replaced with information alleging that there was no evidence of deliberate sex-based discrimination in employment. The new information explained that the difference in pay was due to the choices that women make, such as seeking lower-paying jobs and remaining out of the paid workforce for long periods, among other (fallacious) reasons.

So removal of website information began within days of Trump taking office, but advocacy groups on our side sent a joint letter to the **Office of Management and Budget** (OMB) reminding them that under the **Paperwork Reduction Act** any agency must “provide adequate notice when initiating, substantially modifying or terminating significant information dissemination products.”

Prior to the new administration assuming power, the **Internet Archive Way Back Machine** folks (<http://web.archive.org/web/>) set up a Canadian-based “mirror” website on which to store many of the Obama administration websites' information. Additionally, advocacy, research, educational and other types of organizations were advised to download and store materials from government websites they wished to safeguard. NOW alerted allied organizations about the need to save important documents and we heard back that several had done so. BTW, the Way Back Machine website is where you can find selected webpages from the old NOW website, [http://web.archive.org/web/20140801000000\\*/http://now.org](http://web.archive.org/web/20140801000000*/http://now.org)

Overtime, Obama administration materials will likely be replaced. We may be seeing on many government agency websites a new version of reality – no doubt, many with “alternative facts.”

**Wholesale Repeal of Regulations** – Congress has launched into a fast paced-effort to repeal dozens of Obama administration regulations. This they are conducting this process through the Congressional Review Act which limits amendments, cannot be filibustered and requires only a simple majority to pass a measure. Repeals being considered:

- Repeal of a regulation that does not allow the government to discriminate against qualified health providers for reasons not connected with qualifications in determining which providers will receive Title X Family Planning funds. This repeal by the House on February 16, if approved by the Senate and signed into law, would allow states to deny Planned Parenthood – or any other provider -- important family planning funding. Some 4 million

persons (who live in areas where there are very few or no reproductive health care providers) are estimated to be disadvantaged by this action.

- On February 2, the House adopted House Joint Resolution which would nullify the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces rule which ensures that contractors' employees are given the necessary information each pay period to make sure that they are getting paid what they are owed, and that workers who are victims of sexual assault or sexual harassment get their day in court and are not forced to arbitrate these claims if they work for companies that have very large federal contracts. The rule also required prospective federal contractors to publicly disclose alleged violations of labor laws, whether or not the violations have been adjudicated. This information can be reviewed prior to decisions about awarding contracts. The action is pending in the Senate

Numerous other rules will be soon considered and the next NOW Government Relations Board Report will provide more details. In the meantime, this website provides further information, <http://rulesatrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/CRS-Major-Rules-Subject-to-CRA-Under-Carryover-01-03-2017.pdf>

## ATTACKS ON REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

### Trump Expands, Reinstates Harmful Global Gag Rule So Women Will Continue to Die

As three other Republican presidents before him have done, Donald Trump made the **global gag rule** (or **Mexico City Policy** when it was first promoted by the Reagan administration) official again. The GGR, as it is referred to, requires the U.S. to *not* contribute to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) abroad that “perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in other nations.” To receive U.S. funding for any of their family planning work, NGOs have to promise that they won't even speak of abortion. Sixty-three thousand women die each year from trying to end a pregnancy unsafely. A study in 2011 by **Stanford** researchers found that the global gag rule was associated with an *increase* in abortions. Trump's GGR now extends to ALL U.S. governmental departments and agencies working on a wide range of health issues. For more information, read <http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/trump-makes-the-global-gag-rule-on-abortion-even-worse> And, you can write or call the White House with your objections to GGR at, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/write-or-call>

**A Protest at the White House** - On Wednesday, February 22, there will be Tweetstorm, #TrumpGlobalGag and #NoAbortionBan as organized by numerous women's rights and women's health organizations, including NOW and the **Feminist Majority Foundation**. On March 8, there will be a March from **Freedom Plaza** to the **White House**, beginning at 11:30 a.m. and reaching Lafayette Park, across from the White House by noon. Organizers note that “Trump's global gag rule is a grotesque expansion of a failed, deadly policy that prohibits foreign organizations that receive U.S. global health assistance from providing or even

discussing abortions with patients. This rule now threatens access to safe abortion and other basic health care for millions of people around the world.”

On January 24, the House passed (238-183) **the No Taxpayer-Funding for Abortions and Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017** (H.R. 7) that would place the Hyde Amendment in federal statutes so it will not have to be passed every year as part of the budget. This measure denies federal funding through Medicaid to help low-income women pay for abortion care, with exceptions in cases of rape or incest or when a physical condition endangers a woman’s life unless an abortion is performed. Additionally, it prohibits qualified health plans (receiving premium subsidies) sold through health insurance exchanges under the Affordable Care Act from providing abortion coverage even when part of the premium is paid for separately by the individual. Three Democrats (Peterson – Minn., Cuellar – Tex., Lipinski – Ill.) joined all Republicans to vote for this harmful measure.

### **Other Reproductive Rights News**

**New NARAL Report on Reproductive Rights in the States** – The annual publication, “Who Decides? The Status of Women’s Reproductive Rights in the United States,” is now available online at, <http://www.prochoiceamerica.org/assets/download-files/wd-archive/who-decides-2017.pdf> In this 26<sup>th</sup> edition of the report, a profile of each state on a wide range of pro- and anti-choice measures is graphically represented. The all-too-real total of 932 anti-choice measures adopted since 1995 is depicted, but the good news is that from 2004 through 2016 434 positive pro-choice measures were signed into law. “Who Decides?” is a great resource for women’s reproductive rights activists.