

# **AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2583:**

## **Amendment to Strike Section 412 (Global Gag Rule)**

*Offered by Ranking Member Howard L. Berman*

### **SUMMARY:**

Current law already restricts U.S. foreign assistance funding for abortions and has done so since 1974, and yet in the name of “right to life,” the Majority is cutting off funds that are literally saving tens of thousands of lives. The Global Gag Rule is a harmful policy that prevents poor women and families around the world from gaining access to essential information and health care services. The language in the bill not only bars family planning assistance to local health care providers in poor countries, it bars ALL assistance to such organizations – including HIV/AIDS funding, water and sanitation, child survival, and education. This amendment removes this underlying text because it is vital for the U.S. to support programs that enable women and families to make decisions to ensure their health and the health of their families.

### **THIS AMENDMENT WOULD:**

- This amendment would strike section 412 of H.R. 2583 that reinstates the Global Gag Rule.

### **WHY THIS AMENDMENT IS NECESSARY:**

- The language in the bill would prohibit the U.S. government from providing any form of assistance to an overseas health center unless it agrees not to use its own, private, non-U.S. funds for: (1) abortion services, (2) abortion-related advocacy, or (3) abortion counseling or referrals.
- These Global Gag Rule provisions are far more extreme than any policy that was implemented under Presidents Reagan, George Bush, or George W. Bush. Even President George W. Bush exempted HIV/AIDS assistance from the Global Gag Rule restrictions.
- The clinics and NGOs supported by U.S. funding have the expertise, capacity, and proven track records on supporting women’s health around the world. They reach out to rural communities who have no other access point to health care services. The language in the bill would remove a vital lifeline for women and their families.
- Withholding investment in women’s health by imposing this language on the clinics and NGOs that support them is a major step back in U.S. development efforts around the world.

### **ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THIS AMENDMENT:**

- Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- International Planned Parenthood Federation
- The Public Health Institute
- Pathfinder International
- Population Action International
- United Methodist Church, General Board of Church & Society
- National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)
- International Women’s Health Coalition
- Guttmacher Institute
- NARAL Pro-Choice America
- Population Connection
- The Feminist Majority