



NOW-NYC

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Contact: Sonia Ossorio

917.332.8199

NOW-NYC Vows To Fight For Abortion Insurance Coverage and Defeat Stupak-Pitts Amendment

Anti-Choice House Members Pass Amendment Denying Women Coverage for Abortion

Sunday, November 08, 2009 – New York, New York. Sonia Ossorio, president of the National Organization for Women, New York City, calls on every pro-choice woman in New York City to join NOW-NYC in fighting the latest assault on women's reproductive health care.

In an up-or-down vote late Saturday night, Congress passed the Stupak-Pitts amendment, which bars any federally subsidized insurance plan from covering abortions. The original bill already included a ban on federal funding for abortion and a requirement that only women's personal funds could pay for abortion care. Abortion is the most common surgical procedure performed on women in the United States.

"This is a huge setback for women and for health care in the United States," Ossorio said. "If this amendment makes it into the final health reform bill, individuals will be forced to buy supplemental insurance to cover abortion. If we let our leadership and the anti-choice movement get away with this, they'll know they can do whatever they want in the future to deny us our rights."

The Stupak-Pitts amendment would force women who want comprehensive reproductive health care coverage to purchase a separate, single-service rider, because it makes it virtually impossible for private insurance companies to participate in the new system and offer abortion coverage.

"Forcing women to buy a supplemental insurance rider to cover abortion is out of the question," Ossorio said. "This is a radical departure from our current system where more than 85 percent of private insurance plans cover abortion services."

Despite our gains in the last two election cycles, anti-choice members of Congress still outnumber our pro-choice allies. Lawmakers must be held accountable for this attack on women's health care.

"This vote is a wakeup call," Ossorio said. "Women are furious. Women will not stand for anti-choice lawmakers who think they can use health reform to attack women's health, women's privacy and women's rights. This fight is not over, it's just getting started."

The National Organization for Women is the nation's largest organization working to advance women's rights and improve women's lives. The New York City Chapter of NOW, founded in 1966, is one of the largest chapters in the country with over 5,000 members locally and 35,000 statewide. NOW-NYC works to protect women's reproductive choices, end violence against women and eliminate sex discrimination in our schools, workplaces, and the justice system in New York.

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