

**MEDIA ADVISORY FOR:** Wednesday, March 19, 2021

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**WED. 8AM: Mobile Billboard Circles White House, Capitol Urging Biden Administration to Ensure Access to Abortion Care by removing all abortion funding restrictions from Budget**

*Ipas, CHANGE (the Center for Health & Gender Equity), Global Justice Center (GJC), Pop Connect & UltraViolet, Commission Truck Billboard in D.C. Demanding Biden Remove Helms, Abortion Funding Restrictions in Presidential Budget This Week*

**WASHINGTON, DC** -- On, Wednesday, March 19th, starting at 8:00 ET, a mobile billboard will traverse the White House and Capitol buildings urging the Biden Administration to ensure access to quality sexual and reproductive health care, including abortion care by releasing a budget free from the Helms amendment and all abortion funding restrictions.

It will display messages reading: ***“President Biden: To protect reproductive freedom, your budget must be free from Helms,” “Repeal Helms Now, Pass the Abortion is Health Care Everywhere Act,” “Abortion is Health Care, Repeal the Helms Amendment,” and “Congress must pass spending bills free from Helms and all abortion funding restrictions.”***

**WHEN:** Wednesday, March 19, 8:00 AM ET

**WHERE:** Loop between White House and Capitol Buildings

[According to Guttmacher Institute](#), repealing the Helms amendment and ensuring access to safe abortion would prevent 19 million unsafe abortions abroad annually, 17,000 maternal deaths, and would decrease the number of maternal deaths due to unsafe abortions by 98% in 33 countries.

*“U.S. policies neglect and stigmatize abortion care in our foreign assistance—it is time for that to come to an end. President Biden can stand up for the sexual and reproductive health of all people, in the U.S. and abroad. We urge President Biden to put forth a budget free from abortion funding restrictions, including the Helms amendment,” said Dr. Anu Kumar, President and CEO of Ipas. “For nearly 50 years, the Helms amendment has denied women and girls the full spectrum of care they need. Each year, there are 35 million abortions performed in unsafe conditions, most in resource-poor countries. Black and brown women disproportionately bear the burden of this discriminatory and deeply unjust policy. In short, Helms denies people living thousands of miles from the U.S. their bodily autonomy and reproductive freedom. This administration should do what’s right—proudly support reproductive justice which includes abortion.”*

*“Removing the Helms amendment is a crucial step in dismantling neo-colonialism and racism in our U.S. foreign policy,” said Serra Sippel, President of CHANGE (the Center for Health and Gender Equity). “It’s long past time for the U.S. to stop undermining efforts by countries and advocates to make safe abortion accessible to those who need it. Ending Helms is a matter of life or death: its repeal would prevent millions of unsafe abortions and millions of subsequent injuries and disabilities, and would sharply decrease maternal deaths and pregnancy-related*

*complications for women internationally. Moreover, removing Helms would serve as an opportunity for the United States to play catch-up when it comes to its leadership in the realm of sexual and reproductive health and rights. People all over the world cannot afford for the U.S. government to turn its back on them.”*

*“The Biden administration has issued many statements affirming its support for sexual and reproductive rights. It’s time they translate those words into bold action,” **said Akila Radhakrishnan, president of the Global Justice Center.** “Presenting a clean budget free of discriminatory funding restrictions on abortion is exactly what we need to see from U.S. leadership in a moment where the human right to abortion access is under historic levels of attack, including here in the U.S. Budgets are fundamental values statements so it’s critical that President Biden takes leadership to show that his administration truly values abortion access.”*

*“Bodily autonomy and access to reproductive healthcare is the foundation of a better future for women, communities of color, LGBTQ+ people, young people, and people with low incomes,” **said Sonja Spoo, Campaign Director of UltraViolet.** “As the world works to rebuild from the devastation of this pandemic, an economic crisis, and centuries of systemic racism, we must continue to cement these rights and dismantle the policies implemented by men like Donald Trump to deny the world’s most vulnerable communities the right to abortion and other critical forms of reproductive healthcare in the U.S. and abroad. The administration must move with the urgency this moment requires to ensure access to abortion and reproductive health care for all against mounting threats both in the U.S. and abroad. Critically, we need President Biden to make good on his campaign promise and take a strong stance against the Helms amendment and all abortion restrictions, and for Congress to work to pass the Abortion is Health Care Everywhere Act.”*

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*[Ipas](#) is an international reproductive health and rights organization working to ensure that abortion and contraceptive care are essential health services—and that all people can access them. Our programs use a multifaceted approach that addresses reproductive health services, access to services and fulfillment of reproductive rights.*

*[CHANGE](#) is a U.S.-based nongovernmental organization that promotes sexual and reproductive health and rights as a means to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, by shaping the public’s conversation, elevating women’s voices, and influencing U.S. and global policies. We are guided by our vision of a world that respects, protects, and honors sexual and reproductive rights for all. Our work is grounded in and driven by a human rights framework at the intersection of multiple sectors including women’s rights, human rights, family planning, maternal health, HIV and AIDS, and gender-based violence.*

*[The Global Justice Center](#) is an international human rights organization dedicated to advancing gender equality through the rule of law. We combine advocacy with legal analysis, working to expose and root out the patriarchy inscribed in so many international laws. We believe that enforcing treaties and international human rights laws can be a catalyst for radical change, moving these hard-won rights from paper to practice.*

*[UltraViolet](#) is a community of more than one million people that drives feminist cultural and political change. Through people power and strategic advocacy, we work to improve the lives of women and girls of all identities and backgrounds, and all people impacted by sexism, by dismantling discrimination and creating a cost for sexism.*