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President Biden’s budget continues the harmful Helms Amendment: Budget would eliminate Hyde but falls short of his global commitments

CHAPEL HILL, NC (May 28, 2021)—We celebrate President Biden’s historic move to release a budget that is free of the Hyde Amendment, which for more than 40 years has denied insurance coverage of abortion for people in the United States enrolled in Medicaid working to make ends meet. However, the Biden administration promised to protect the [sexual and reproductive health and rights](#) of people living in the U.S. *and abroad*. Today, he has kept only half of that promise by including the Helms Amendment in his budget.

The [Helms Amendment](#) prevents millions of people across the globe from accessing the critical abortion care that they want and need, and from making the reproductive decisions that are best for themselves and their families. The President’s failure to exclude this abortion funding restriction in his first budget perpetuates this harm.

Each year, [35 million unsafe abortions](#) occur in low- and middle-income countries, resulting in tens of thousands of preventable deaths and injuries. Under the Helms Amendment, all of U.S. foreign assistance will remain unavailable for abortion services, training and equipment, and even abortion information and counseling.

“President Biden’s budget decision today is historic; it’s a win for American people and a call to Congress to finally repeal Hyde, which has always most impacted women of color,” says Ipas President and CEO Anu Kumar. “It is unacceptable that President Biden did not take this opportunity to also signal his commitment to reproductive justice for *all* people, no matter where they live, at home or abroad. Since 1973, the Helms Amendment has oppressed and controlled the bodies of Black and brown women who live thousands of miles from the United States using the power of U.S. funding. It is time for this to finally end.”

Congress can right the course by passing federal appropriations bills that eliminate the Helms Amendment and all abortion funding restrictions, and by passing the [Abortion is Health Care Everywhere Act](#) to fully repeal the Helms Amendment.

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Ipas is an international, non-governmental organization that increases access to safe abortions and contraception. Visit <https://www.ipas.org/> for more information.