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## **Government funding bill retains harmful abortion restrictions**

Abortion funding restrictions prevent millions of people making reproductive decisions best for themselves and their families

**CHAPEL HILL, NC** —Yesterday, Congress released, and the House passed its omnibus spending bill that funds the federal government through the end of the Fiscal Year. While the bill contains important spending, including emergency assistance to Ukraine, it fails to include critical new investments needed to address the reproductive health needs of people living in the U.S. and abroad.

Funding levels for Title X, international family planning programs and the UN Population Fund were flatlined and the bill failed to remove abortion funding restrictions, such as the Helms Amendment and a permanent repeal of the global gag rule.

As an organization that works around the world to advance reproductive justice by expanding access to abortion and contraception, we are disappointed the bill fails to remove the harmful and discriminatory Helms Amendment, which denies access to abortion services for millions of women and girls living in low- and middle-income countries. It also fails to permanently repeal the global gag rule, which for decades has been used as a political football and has denied millions of people access to abortion.

From Anu Kumar, Ipas President and CEO:

“Abortion funding restrictions prevent millions of people, both in the United States and across the globe, from accessing the essential healthcare that they want and need and from making the reproductive decisions that are best for themselves and their families. Policies advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights are always used as political bargaining chips. Is this really the time to trade off peoples’ rights and access to reproductive healthcare? For millions who will have to turn to unsafe abortion, the cost could be their life. This is not the message the United States wants to send. We need to protect the reproductive health and rights of people globally, not enforce restrictions that only put people at risk.

“We thank leaders in Congress who worked so hard to make abortion funding restrictions a thing of the past, especially Representative Rosa DeLauro and Representative Barbara Lee. Despite initial indications in the House that truly historic gains could be realized this year in Congress, the final spending package fell tragically short. That we could not realize this incredible progress and have left critically important reproductive health priorities on the table at a time when abortion access has never been more at risk is tragic and must be the top priority in future legislation.

“We will continue to sound the alarm to Congress and the Administration – everyone, no matter who they are or where they live, must have reproductive freedom.”

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