

In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda Applauds the Introduction of the EACH Woman Act

(Washington, DC) July 8, 2015-In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda thanks Representatives Barbara Lee (D-CA), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Louise Slaughter (D-NY), and more than 60 Members of Congress for taking leadership by introducing the Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH Woman) Act. This bill ensures health coverage for abortion for every woman no matter her income, insurer or where she lives.

The EACH Woman Act serves to benefit all women, especially women of color and young women, by removing politically erected barriers to a woman's ability to make life choices that are best for herself and her family.

"It is not our place to decide for another woman whether she should have an abortion. None of us can know all her circumstances," said Marcela Howell, founder and strategic director of In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda. "But it is vital that every woman can consider all the options available to her, however little she earns or however she is insured."

The EACH Woman Act makes sure that every woman is able to make her own decisions about pregnancy regardless of whether she has private or government-funded health insurance. The bill further ensures that lack of coverage will not stand in the way of a woman making the best decision for herself and her family.

"The EACH Woman Act puts the power back in the hands of Black women, in varying financial and life situations, and gives options that best suit their families' needs," said Michelle Batchelor, National Director for In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda.

When policymakers severely restrict Medicaid coverage for abortions, one in four poor women is forced to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term. The lasting implication is that a woman and her family, who were already struggling to make ends meet, become more enmeshed in poverty.

With unprecedented restrictions and bans across the country on a woman's ability to get an abortion, the EACH woman Act marks a long-needed change for women and their families by creating two important standards for reproductive health:

- First, it respects that every woman should be able to make her own decisions about pregnancy. If a woman gets her health care through the federal government, she will be covered for all pregnancy-related care, including abortion

- Second, it prohibits political interference with decisions of private health insurance companies to offer coverage for abortion care.

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