



# FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUNDATION

January 16, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chair  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Alexander and Ranking Member Murray,

The Feminist Majority Foundation writes in strong opposition to Representative Tom Price's nomination to serve as the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. His extreme opposition to Medicaid, Medicare, Affordable Care Act, the provision of abortion care, and the increased access to birth control disqualify him for this nomination.

The agencies and programs of HHS are vital to the health and well-being of women and their families. During his tenure in the House of Representatives, Representative Price has been a leading advocate against the Affordable Care Act and has voted against it over 60 times. He has been a leading voice in Congress to dramatically reduce Medicaid coverage and would end Medicare as we know it. He has been an advocate against the very programs that he has been nominated to lead – programs that tens of millions of people desperately need for health care.

The Affordable Care Act has improved the lives of tens of millions of people. Thirty-two million people now have health care coverage either through the health insurance exchanges of ACA or the expansion of Medicaid provided by the ACA. Fifty-five million women have benefited from the ACA's preventive care package services without co-pays or deductibles, including well-woman visits, a variety of birth control options and counseling, vaccinations, and breastfeeding support. Fifty-two million people with pre-existing conditions can now have comprehensive health insurance coverage. And, of course, millions of young people until the age of 26 have coverage through their parent(s)'s health insurance.

Rep. Price's record shows all of these life-saving features of ACA would be in jeopardy if his policies were implemented. But his opposition to ACA is not the only threat to millions of people's health care. His appointment would be a serious threat to Medicare and Medicaid. Medicare has provided life-saving care to millions of older people– the majority of whom are

women – and people with disabilities, who otherwise could not afford it. Instead of working to strengthen this critically needed program, Rep. Price has advocated unrealistic privatization plans that would end Medicare as we know it. What insurance companies would insure the elderly as completely as Medicare does at a reasonable rates that, for example, the average elderly woman who survives on Social Security annual income (\$13,150 in 2014) could afford? As the person ages under Medicare, what insurance company would continue to provide full coverage at affordable premiums? What's more American workers have paid into Medicare all their working lives and have earned this coverage.

Rep. Price's policies for drastically cutting Medicaid funding through inadequate block grant funding and per capita caps and changing it from a guaranteed program as needed for eligible persons to a limited block grant program is especially harmful to low-income women and families. Millions of women need Medicaid for reproductive health services including family planning and healthy pregnancies. Today some two-thirds of nursing homes costs are paid through Medicaid. The current Medicaid federal payments are guaranteed on an "as-needed" basis to eligible low-income, elderly, disabled and/or children. Block granting or in other words capping federal Medicaid payments to states would be devastating not only to the millions of eligible persons but also to hospitals, nursing homes, and would undermine the entire medical system of the nation.

Especially frightening to women and impacting men's health and well-being is Rep. Price's extreme opposition to abortion and family planning including co-sponsoring legislation to outlaw abortion, stem cell research, some forms of contraception, and in vitro fertilization. He even opposes private health insurance coverage of abortion. He has supported measures to totally defund Planned Parenthood which provides not only excellent, low-cost reproductive health care to women but also cancer screenings, STI and HIV testing as well as other health care needs. Recklessly he has voted to eliminate Title X funding, the national family program which was founded with bipartisan support in 1970 and has helped millions of women with what would be otherwise unaffordable and essential reproductive health care.

Women and men cannot go back to a day of back alley and unsafe abortions, and a day without the ability to control their own reproductive lives. Older people, disabled people, low-income people, and children cannot go back to a day without any access to affordable health care. We urge you to vote no on the confirmation of Representative Tom Price for Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

For Women's Equality,



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