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35 Years of Feminism From Marching in the Streets to a Seat at the Table

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May 17, 2023

The Honorable Senator Jeanne Shaheen
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Email: Legislative Director Alison_MacDonald@Shaheen.senate.gov

RE: S.1098 (Shaheen) Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights (HER) Act - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Shaheen,

On behalf of the Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee (SBWPC), I am writing to express support for S.1098 addressing the global gag rule affecting health and reproductive care. SBWPC's mission is dedicated to furthering gender equality and other feminist values. As one of the largest women's political committees in Santa Barbara County with hundreds of members, we advocate for a diverse set of positions including Reproductive Justice and International Peace and Security. SBWPC is also aligned with Planned Parenthood. <https://sbwpc.org/positions/>.

We are aware that the Biden administration has already taken action to rescind the global gag rule for now, but Congress must pass the Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights (HER) Act to end the global gag rule for good. This rule targets international organizations that work on U.S.-funded health projects to expand access to contraception, prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, combat malaria, and improve maternal and child health. Under the global gag rule, groups are banned from all U.S. government global health funding if they provide, counsel, refer, or advocate for safe and legal abortion -- even with their own funding. The global gag rule is devastating for people who already face barriers to care around the world by cutting off access to many of the best, trusted health care providers, thus women and girls lifesaving health care services. And evidence shows that this restriction on programs that are meant to help people around the world is directly responsible for increased deaths from unsafe abortions and pregnancy complications. **Therefore, SBWPC wishes to sign on as a supporter of S.1098.**

Thank you for reviewing our organization's position on this issue. Should you wish to communicate further with us, please email us at info@sbwpc.org or visit our website: www.sbwpc.org

Sincerely,

Paula Lopez Ochoa

Paula Lopez Ochoa
President SBWPC

CC: Rep. Barbara Lee re companion bill HR 1838