

House Foreign Affairs Committee
Hearing: “Unique Challenges Women Face in Global Health”
Cathy McMorris Rodgers Testimony
February 5, 2020

Thank you Chairman Engel and Ranking Member McCaul for inviting me to testify today.

Since America’s founding, we’ve cherished every person’s inalienable human rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It’s on us --- all of us--- to uphold those values and make sure they are reflected at home and in our policies abroad.

The Trump Administration has provided historic leadership on this front. In January of 2017, President Trump implemented the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, which has expanded on the Mexico City policy. This affirms the dignity of unborn life in foreign aid funding. It requires foreign non-governmental organizations to agree to not perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning overseas. Organizations that provide and promote abortions abroad should under no circumstances be funded by American taxpayers. In fact, according to the latest Marist poll, 6 in 10 Americans oppose using tax dollars to pay for abortion. More than 3 in 4 Americans oppose using tax dollars to support abortions in other countries. The terms of the PLGHA are clear and are in line with overwhelming public opinion: NGOs can receive global health assistance awards if they agree to abide by the PLGHA policy. PLGHA does not reduce the amount of global health assistance that we make available or prohibit any group from receiving U.S. assistance. I’ll repeat that. This policy does not reduce the amount of global health assistance available, nor does it cut funding from any organizations. The only organizations to not receive funding under PLGHA are those who have chosen not to accept the policy restrictions that come with U.S. assistance. It means we are using resources for the healthcare and lifesaving care of both women and children. It provides essential healthcare, nutritional aid, and humanitarian assistance to people in need, at every stage of their lives. To win the future, America should be leading to affirm the dignity and value of both patients: mothers and children. That’s why here at home, I’ve led on solutions to reduce maternal and infant mortality.

Again, as warriors for human dignity and human value, I applaud this administration’s historic leadership on policies like PLGHA. From combatting human trafficking, to promoting freedom and opportunity, and also improving

healthcare for women and our most vulnerable, America must continue to lead and encourage the rest of the world to follow our leadership too.

Thank you.