

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE DEMOCRATS

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Democrats Eliminate Dozens of Poison Pill Rider from Defense, Labor-HHS, Transportation-Housing Appropriations Package

Democrats successfully eliminated dozens of extreme partisan policy riders President Trump and Republicans in Congress sought to attach to the fiscal year 2026 Defense; Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education; and Transportation and Housing and Urban Development appropriations package.

These provisions would have prohibited access to abortion care and reproductive healthcare services, eliminated gun violence prevention research, allowed “junk health insurance” plans, taken away student loan repayment options, singled out blue state infrastructure projects for cuts, and undone worker protections against wage theft.

Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

- ~~Prohibit funding for the purposes of providing information on, or promoting access to an abortion.~~
- ~~Prohibit funding to Planned Parenthood or other health care entities that perform abortions.~~
- ~~Prohibit funding to a hospital or post graduate physician training program if the hospital or training program has an opt out requirement for training related to abortion (as opposed to an opt in requirement), which would result in fewer OB/GYNs receiving training to handle reproductive health care issues, including pregnancy related emergencies and miscarriages.~~
- ~~Prohibit funding for the Department of HHS “to require any project under title X of the PHS Act to refer for abortions” or require a provider of services under title X “to subvert or operate in conflict with any State law limiting referral for abortion/pregnancy counseling”.~~
- ~~Amend the Public Health Service Act to create a right to monetary damages in a civil action for a violation of the Weldon amendment (which allows health care providers to discriminate against patients by refusing to provide, pay for, cover, or refer for abortion).~~

- Prohibit funding to conduct or support medical research using fetal tissue.
- Prohibit funding to implement, administer, or enforce Executive Order 14076 (Protecting Access to Reproductive Healthcare Services) or Executive Order 14079 (Securing Access to Reproductive Healthcare and Other Healthcare Services), which are intended to increase access to reproductive health care for women impacted by State abortion bans.
- Block gun violence prevention research
- Block the Department of Health and Human Services from prohibiting insurers from selling “junk health insurance” plans.
- Block the Department of Health and Human Services from implementing rules and regulations to support Medicare and Medicaid programs.
- Block policies related to nondiscrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Block funding for gender affirming health care services for transgender individuals.
- Block funding for the Unaccompanied Children Program Foundation Rule that codified policies and regulations from the 1997 Flores Settlement Agreement regarding the placement, care, and services provided to unaccompanied children in HHS’s custody.
- Block funding for unaccompanied children to be reunified with parents or family members based solely on immigration status of sponsor.
- Block the Department of Education from implementing a final rule to prevent sex discrimination and sex-based harassment at schools or issuing a final rule to clarify how all students can participate in athletics.
- Prohibit the Department of Education from implementing regulations related to student loans and income-driven repayment.
- Prohibit the Department of Labor from implementing regulatory changes that would improve working conditions for agricultural workers.
- Prohibit the Department of Labor from implementing regulatory changes that protect workers from misclassification and wage theft.
- Prohibit funding related to Critical Race Theory.
- Prohibit policies or programs intended to promote diversity, equity, or inclusion.
- Prohibit funding to take action against a person who opposes marriage equality.
- Limit which flags can be flown over a federal facility, aimed at eliminating the use of pride flags.
- Block existing policies intended to respond to climate change.

Defense

- Prohibit funds for travel expenses related to reproductive healthcare for servicemembers and their families, even when they are stationed in states where it is unavailable.
- Move Mexico from Northern Command to Southern Command.
- Put servicemembers' health at risk by changing vaccine requirements.
- Protect individuals who discriminate against marriage for same-sex couples.
- Prohibits funds for surgical procedures or hormone therapies for gender affirming care.
- Prohibits funds to promote, host, facilitate, or support drag queen events as bringing "discredit upon the military."
- Prohibit funds to classify or facilitate classification on any communication by a US person as "mis, dis, or mal information."
- Prohibits funds for critical race theory, a dog whistle with no relevance to actual military training or readiness.
- Destroy the Defense Department's efforts to build a more inclusive, effective, and modern military by banning the use of funds to implement, administer, apply, enforce, or carry out the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan of the Department of Defense or related executive orders.
- Bans funds for the Chief Diversity Officer, Deputy Inspector General for DEI, and Senior Advisors for Diversity and Inclusion.
- Bans funds for any office of diversity, equity or inclusion.
- Prohibit funds for NewsGuard Technologies Inc, a nonpartisan media literacy tool.

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development

- Prohibits funds from being used for a high-speed and intercity passenger rail development projects in California, Minnesota, and Texas.
- Strips basic protections for tenants and makes it easier for landlords to evict families in federally assisted housing by eliminating the 30 day eviction notice requirement.
- Empowers the HUD Secretary to upend rental assistance and public housing programs by waiving or creating alternatives to key statutory requirements, such as income definitions, rent calculation formulas, or eligibility requirements.
- Prohibits federal funds for sanctuary jurisdictions, injecting immigration scare tactics into an infrastructure funding bill and undermining local law enforcement.
- Prohibits HUD from using funds to improve the energy efficiency of new housing financed by the Department by blocking any future

~~updates to minimum energy efficiency standards, undercutting efforts to reduce household energy costs, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and help protect the environment for future generations.~~

- Imposes an out-of-service order for certain truck drivers.
- ~~Prohibits funds from being used to promote any rulemaking that requires vehicles over 26,000 pounds used in interstate commerce to be equipped with a speed limiting device.~~
- ~~Prohibited funds from being used to amend federal preemption determinations for California and Washington when these states seek waivers to change requirements related to Meals and Rest Breaks for motor carriers.~~