The Honorable Michael R. Pence  
Vice President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500  

CC: Director Mick Mulvaney  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20503  

Dear Vice President Pence,

Thank you for your consistent pro-life leadership. We deeply appreciate your courageous stand for life and are writing to ask for your intervention in advocating for critical pro-life policies in the FY18 spending bill.

First, we ask you to support enacting the Conscience Protection Act in the FY18 appropriations bill. Our House-passed appropriations bill (H.R. 3354) includes the full text of the Conscience Protection Act.

Many of us had the honor of meeting three courageous women: Cathy DeCarlo, Fe Vinoya, and Sandra Mendoza. These nurses are healthcare heroes. Ms. DeCarlo was coerced by her employer to participate in the abortion of a 22-week-old unborn child in violation of her conscience. For years afterward, she fought for justice. Ms. Vinoya and Ms. Mendoza bravely endured retaliation from their employers when they chose not to assist in abortions.

Such discrimination is illegal under existing conscience laws. Currently, however, victims of abortion discrimination do not have the ability to bring their cases to court to seek relief. The Conscience Protection Act would remedy this problem, giving women like Ms. DeCarlo, Ms. Vinoya, and Ms. Mendoza a private right of action to defend their rights in court.

Secondly, it is essential that, if any funding is appropriated to stabilize Obamacare healthcare markets, the Hyde amendment is attached, protecting those funds from continuing to subsidize abortion-covering plans. The recent Senate efforts to advance the “Alexander-Murray” (Bipartisan Healthcare Stabilization Act) and “Collins-Nelson” (S. 1835, Lower Premiums Through Reinsurance Act) Obamacare stabilization bills have drawn our opposition primarily because those two bills, as currently written, do not include statutory protections barring the appropriated funds from supporting healthcare plans that include abortion. We cannot support any bill that provides funds to continue Obamacare’s status quo without statutory pro-life protections.
For decades, pro-life riders – like the Hyde amendment, which prevents abortion funding in the Medicaid program – have been a critical bulwark against assaults on the dignity of life through government programs. The consolidated appropriations package (H.R. 3354) passed by the House on September 14, 2017, carried 11 new riders and funding level changes to advance pro-life protections. For a complete list of new pro-life riders passed by the House in 2017, please see the attached addendum. All of these provisions were supported by our Leadership, the Conference, and represent the will of the House.

We hope and trust that you will advocate for these pro-life issues as the conclusion of the FY18 appropriations bill is negotiated.

Sincerely,

Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress

Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress

Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Diane Black  
Member of Congress

Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress

Marsha Blackburn  
Member of Congress

Mia Love  
Member of Congress

Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress

Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress

Phil Roe, M.D.  
Member of Congress
Randy Hultgren  
Member of Congress

Ron Estes  
Member of Congress

Bill Flores  
Member of Congress

Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress

Michael Conaway  
Member of Congress

Austin Scott  
Member of Congress

Billy Long  
Member of Congress

Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress

Todd Rokita  
Member of Congress

Stevan Pearce  
Member of Congress

Brad Wenstrup  
Member of Congress

Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress
Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress

Rob Woodall  
Member of Congress

Randy Weber  
Member of Congress

Dave Brat  
Member of Congress

Andy Biggs  
Member of Congress

Evan Jenkins  
Member of Congress

Jeff Fortenberry  
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress

Andy Barr  
Member of Congress

Roger Williams  
Member of Congress

Alex X. Mooney  
Member of Congress

Luke Messer  
Member of Congress
Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress

Mike Johnson  
Member of Congress

Jody Hice  
Member of Congress

Brian Babin, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress

Robert Pittenger  
Member of Congress

Francis Rooney  
Member of Congress

Barry Loudermilk  
Member of Congress

John Ratcliffe  
Member of Congress

Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

Roger Marshall, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Steve Russell  
Member of Congress
ADDENDUM
In addition to all existing pro-life limitation of funds amendments, H.R. 3354 contains several new pro-life riders and funding level changes:

In Division D (Financial Services):

- **Harris Multi-State Plan Abortion Funding Ban** – This provision would eliminate elective abortion coverage from the Multi-State Plan Program, created by Obamacare.
- **Harris Amendment to Repeal DC Legalization of Physician Assisted Suicide** – This provision nullifies the 2016 DC law that authorizes a DC adult resident who has been diagnosed as terminally ill to request and receive a prescription for lethal medication.
- **Palmer Amendment to prevent implementation of the DC Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Act (RHNDA).** RHNDA is a 2014 DC law that prohibits employers from discriminating against individuals based on “reproductive health decisions,” including the decision to have an abortion. RHNDA could be used to force religious or pro-life advocacy groups to make personnel decisions that are inconsistent with their sincerely held beliefs about the sanctity of human life. The Palmer Amendment was adopted on the House floor by a vote of 214-194.

In Division E (Homeland Security):

- **Aderholt Detainee Abortion Funding Ban** – A provision to prohibit abortion funding for immigration detainees.

Division F (Labor, Health and Human Services):

- **Full text of Conscience Protection Act (H.R. 644)**–Provides conscience protection for entities that do not wish to participate in abortion, as well as a private right of action for victims of abortion discrimination.
- **Prohibits funding to Planned Parenthood.** Abortion providers that received over $23 million in federal grants in FY16 are barred from receiving any funding made available under the Labor, Health and Human Services bill.
- **Stops federal funding for research using aborted fetal tissue.**
- **Funding Level:** Funds are eliminated from the Title X Family Planning Program, which is a source of funding for Planned Parenthood. ($286 million was appropriated to the Title X program in FY17.)

Division G (State, Foreign Operations):

- **Applies the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (Mexico City Policy),** supporting the President’s January 23, 2017 Executive Memorandum.
- **Prohibits funding to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).**
- **Funding Level:** International Family Planning is reduced to “not more than $461 million.” (“Not less than $575 million” was appropriated in FY17.)