Joins Representatives for Press Conference Before Hearing on H.R. 3

WASHINGTON—Today, U.S. Representative Mike Quigley (IL-05) joined members of Congress to speak out strongly against efforts to curtail women's reproductive rights, specifically H.R. 3—the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

"This Orwellian named bill is an attack on women, introduced with the egregious intent to redefine rape and incest," said Quigley. "We already have language restricting federal funds from paying for abortion. This bill goes further, restricting how private citizens can spend their private dollars. It is repugnant, and a direct offensive against women's health care."

H.R. 3, The No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, would essentially ban abortion coverage in the new health care system, impose tax penalties on Americans with private insurance plans that include abortion coverage, and prohibit the District of Columbia from using local funds for abortion services for women who cannot afford health coverage on their own. Additionally, it seeks to deny women reproductive health care even in cases when a woman's life is in danger, and as introduced would redefine rape and incest.

The press conference was held prior to a Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Commercial and Administrative Law hearing on H.R. 3.

Quigley, in his second term in Congress, has been a staunch supporter of women's health care. He was a fierce advocate for women's reproductive rights during the lead-up to the passage of health care reform this spring and was one of the only men to speak on the House floor against the Stupak amendment
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Full text of Congressman Quigley's Prepared Remarks

The most important thing to understand is that when you boil H.R. 3 down to its essence, it is an attack on women. We have heard today about what is *in* this harmful bill, but I want to speak for a moment about what's *not in* this bill – at least not any more.

This bill was introduced with the intent to redefine rape and incest. Its sponsors wanted to redefine rape to exclude women who are unconscious, mentally disabled, or forced into sex by threat or coercion. They wanted to redefine incest to apply only to minors. And they wanted to give insurance companies the authority to differentiate between rape and forcible rape.

One hundred and seventy-three members of Congress signed their names onto this bill with these provisions. One-hundred and seventy-three.

For all the women out there who have endured rape or incest: This is what they think of you. They think that you can't make your own decisions about your reproductive health. They think you can't make your own decisions about your life. This language reveals the bill's sponsors' true mindset, and it shows how far they will go if we let them.

These egregious provisions are said to be removed from the bill, but sadly the entire bill is chocked full of similarly harmful provisions.

H.R. 3 would allow the government to interfere in private health insurance, and would prevent women from paying for abortion coverage with their own money. H.R. 3 would limit the ability of women to get the care they need, even if a pregnancy threatened a mother's life. Jennifer Peterson, who found a lump in her breast during her pregnancy, would be forced to carry her pregnancy to term, even while it complicated her cancer treatment.

H.R. 3 would allow public hospitals to refuse life-saving care to women. A woman, like the one who recently came to a hospital in Arizona and was told that without an abortion the likelihood of her dying was "near 100 percent," could be denied care. H.R. 3 would also raise taxes on millions of families and small businesses who want to keep the comprehensive coverage they currently have and pay for with their own money.

Under H.R. 3, a restaurant in my district in Chicago that has 40 half-time employees would no longer be able to get a tax credit to help them afford coverage for their employees, and would pay $28,000 more in taxes. The sponsors of H.R. 3 want us to believe this is simply a reiteration of the status quo – We will not be fooled. This bill is an attempt to turn back the clock to a time when women were not allowed to make their own decisions about their own health and their own life.

We will not go back, we will not be fooled, and we will stand up for the reproductive rights of women everywhere.