

## January 23, 2009 - Rep. Slaughter Applauds President Obama for Rescinding the Global Gag Rules

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U.S. Rep. Louise  
Slaughter Applauds President Obama for Rescinding the Global Gag Rule

"This Change Transforms the Way the United States  
Treats Women Worldwide"

Washington, DC - Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules and Co-Chair of the Congressional Pro-Choice Caucus, today issued the following statement applauding President Obama for rescinding the global gag rule, also known as the Mexico City Policy:

"The global gag rule is one of the worst policies to ever see the light of day. I am ecstatic and relieved that President Obama has rescinded this flawed policy which has crippled funding for thousands of health clinics around the world.

I've fought this horrendous policy for years. I commend President Obama for taking immediate action to improve the health and well-being of millions of women and their families.

This change helps transform the way the United States treats women worldwide. I'm proud that we have graduated from the dark ages of the Bush Administration to a policy suited for the 21st century.

Finally millions of women around the world will again have access to critical basic health services, including check-ups and immunizations for children, pre and post-natal care, and family planning services."

## BACKGROUND

The global gag rule prohibited the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) from granting family-planning funds to any overseas health center unless it agreed not to use its own, private, non-U.S. funds for: abortion services, abortion-related advocacy, or abortion counseling or referrals.

The global gag rule has resulted in dramatic drops in funding to organizations worldwide that provide necessary family-planning services and other health-care services.

A joint report by the Guttmacher Institute and UN Population Fund estimated that providing family planning services to the 201 million women in developing countries whose needs are unmet would prevent 52 million unintended pregnancies and 22 million abortions annually. Repealing the Mexico City policy would reduce the number of abortions worldwide by restoring desperately needed family planning services to some of the poorest countries in the world.

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