

This week I am joining Senator INHOFE to introduce the bipartisan Law Enforcement Training for Mental Health Crisis Response Act.

We have seen too many officers hurt. We have seen far too many police officers and sheriff's deputies and Federal agents killed responding to people in their communities suffering a mental health crisis. This bill would invest in training to help officers resolve those situations safely for themselves and for the communities they serve.

This National Police Week, let's offer more than gratitude to the people who put their lives on the line to keep us safe. Let's support these women and men by getting them the tools they need to do their jobs for themselves and for our communities.

WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, over the past couple of months, we have seen State legislatures around the country taking drastic, unconstitutional steps to insert themselves into personal, private healthcare decisions that should be—and have been in the past—between a woman and her doctor.

Ohio and Georgia, two States that wouldn't seem on the surface to have that much in common, have both passed laws that would fundamentally eliminate a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions.

Who made these laws? It is always the same. It is predominantly men who don't even understand how women's bodies and how preventive care like birth control work.

We have one Ohio legislator, a man, who sponsored a bill banning insurance companies from covering certain types of birth control, and then he admitted he didn't really know how birth control actually works.

When asked about the different kinds of medications and birth control devices, he said: "I don't know because I'm not smart enough to know." But he thinks he should make decisions for women.

You would think he is smart enough to know better. You would think that millions of Ohio women know best how to take care of their own bodies.

He was also making up medical procedures. He actually wrote into a version of the Ohio bill an exception allowing insurance companies to cover a made-up medical procedure where a doctor would reimplant an egg from an ectopic pregnancy.

This is a total fantasy. No such medical procedure exists, yet that is what he did.

He is 1 of 99 votes in the Ohio legislature, and he happens to be in the majority, and he happens to be one of the authors of these bills, and he happens to be a supporter of whatever it takes to put Planned Parenthood out of business.

It is not only idiotic to suggest that those medical procedures exist, it is actively harmful to spread information,

not to mention insensitive or cruel—that might be the better word—to the women and families coping with the very real struggles involved in an ectopic pregnancy. That inaccuracy in the law could create serious confusion about how and when doctors could treat women for ectopic pregnancies and put women's health at risk.

After he was asked over and over again what in the world he was talking about, he said: "That's clearly not my area of expertise."

Yet he was going to legislate in an area where, self-admittedly, he didn't have expertise. He was going to tell women what they had to do—fantasy or not—with birth control. He was going to try to tell women what to do with their own bodies. He thought it was a good idea to legislate on it and to insert himself in the medical decisions of millions of women in my State.

Unfortunately, this administration is only making things worse. President Trump and the men he has put in charge, the judges he has appointed—look at the Supreme Court—put their thumb on the scale of justice, always choosing corporations over workers, always choosing Wall Street over consumers, always choosing insurance companies over sick people and, frankly, increasingly over women's bodies and women's decisions.

President Trump and the men he has put in charge are encouraging these male lawmakers in States like Ohio and Georgia and Alabama, where it may be worst of all—they are taking the country backward when it comes to women's health.

Rather than making it easier for women to get care, they make it harder. This administration put out a new rule 2 weeks ago that would allow healthcare providers to refuse to provide needed care for a woman if the treatment supposedly violates their personal beliefs.

In other words, if a woman had a miscarriage and she came in needing emergency care, the doctor could refuse to treat her simply based on his own personal issues and biases. How does that follow the physician mantra of "do no harm"?

It is not just medical professionals who could refuse care; it is hospitals, and it is insurance companies too. I don't know how anyone could suggest a for-profit insurance company has a conscience, yet, apparently under these kinds of laws, it does.

Under this rule, an insurance company can consider the coverage of some services—and we know these are always services related to women, and they are always services related to LGBTQ people, all Americans—against that corporation's supposed conscience. So if the corporation doesn't believe in human rights, doesn't believe in equality of gay people, of LGBTQ people, doesn't believe women should have control over their bodies, that corporation, licensed under the law—they have a conscience, and they can refuse care.

That is what these legislatures are doing, and that is what this President wants to do.

That conscience clause that these corporations and these insurance companies say they believe—I wish that conscience clause would kick in when they are raising premiums, when they deny people coverage for their medication. When they take away an exclusion for a preexisting condition, where they cancel someone's insurance or never insure them because of a preexisting condition, that is not a conscience thing because they are a corporation, but when it comes to women's health, it is.

One woman from Butler County in Southwest Ohio wrote, and she said:

I'd like to know why insurance companies are allowed to pick and choose the drugs they will and will not cover. Since when did they become doctors?

This is just the latest in a long line of rules that hurt women.

They have rolled back title X protections, instituting a new gag rule that would ban many clinics from talking about birth control and family planning options with their patients, limiting their patients' access to accurate medical information.

I just don't understand. Some of these people don't like abortion. I understand that. They want to take away women's healthcare decisions, but they will not help women get contraceptives, and they will not explain the options women have when they come in and want to talk to the doctor about those kinds of things. I just don't get that.

I get letters from women in Ohio who also don't get that, who are scared about what these changes mean.

One woman from Mahoning County wrote to me:

I am a 24 year old woman living with PCOS, a hormonal disorder. Complications of PCOS include Type 2 Diabetes, high risks of miscarriage and infertility, and even cancer.

It is not curable, but it can be treated with birth control.

This domestic gag order will put millions of women at risk across this country.

Let me read again what she said:

I am a 24 year old woman living with PCOS, a hormonal disorder. Complications include Type 2 Diabetes, high risk of miscarriage and infertility, even cancer.

It is not curable, but can be treated with birth control.

This domestic gag order will put millions of women at risk across the country.

Who said these people can practice medicine when they are without a license and do these kinds of things?

I hope my colleagues will think about these women. I hope my colleagues, especially my male colleagues, will spend a little more time trying to help women get the healthcare they need instead of trying to meddle in decisions that always, always, always should be between a woman and her doctor.

I yield the floor.

May 14, 2019

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

S2843

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:20 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THEODORE ROKITA, OF INDIANA, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 3, 2021, VICE DEREK TAI-CHING KAN.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JOHN LESLIE CARWILE, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA.

UNITED STATES PAROLE COMMISSION

MONICA DAVID MORRIS, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE UNITED STATES PAROLE COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS, VICE J. PATRICIA WILSON SMOOT, TERM EXPIRED.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate May 14, 2019:

THE JUDICIARY

MICHAEL J. TRUNCALE, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS.