



April 15, 2026

Dr. Christina Francis  
CEO, AAPLOG Action (American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists)

Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the advocacy arm of the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists (AAPLOG Action), we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to include language in the Fiscal Year 2027 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill protecting the conscience rights of medical residents by returning abortion training to an opt-in. This involves no funding level, but is a language request for the Department of Health and Human Services General Provisions. This language has been included in the past two fiscal years' House LHHS bills (with it passing the House in last year's bill but ultimately removed in conference), and for the second year in a row is included in President Trump's FY27 budget request.

The language request reads as follows:

**(a)** None of the funds appropriated in this Act, and none of the funds in any trust fund to which funds are appropriated in this Act, shall be made available to a hospital or any other entity that administers any post-graduate physician training program, or any other program of training in the health professions, that provides training in the performance of, or assisting in the performance of, induced abortions, or in counseling or referrals for such abortions, if such program—

**(1)** provides or requires such training for any participant in such program without the participant first voluntarily electing to opt in to undergo such training; or

**(2)** subjects any participant in such program to discrimination on the basis that the participant does not—

**(A)** voluntarily elect to opt in to undergo such training; or

**(B)** perform, assist in the performance of, or provide counseling or referrals for, such abortions.

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**(b)** Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit training described in subsection (a) that is not otherwise allowed by law.

AAPLOG is a professional medical organization that represents approximately 8,000 women’s healthcare professionals across the country, including medical students and residents. We were founded to represent the vast majority of OB/GYNs who do not perform induced abortion, which intends the death of our fetal patients. We recognize based on the medical evidence that this practice is not healthcare, and we are passionate about providing excellent, evidence-based healthcare to ALL our patients.

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) is a private nonprofit organization that sets standard for and is the sole accreditor for U.S. residency and fellowship programs – the training doctors complete after medical school. It sets the national training standards for residency programs. In 2018, the ACGME changed its standards for OB/GYN residency programs by enforcing an opt-out abortion training framework. Under this policy, residents are automatically enrolled in abortion training unless they proactively request from their supervising physicians and program leadership—individuals who directly control evaluations, recommendations, and career advancement – to opt out. This structure places undue pressure on residents and creates an environment ripe for coercion and discrimination. No medical trainee should be forced to choose between deeply held ethical convictions and future career opportunities.

Importantly, restoring abortion training to an opt-in model would not interfere with comprehensive OB/GYN education. Residents would continue to receive full training in miscarriage management, ectopic pregnancy treatment, uterine evacuation, and emergency obstetrical care. The only change would be that participation in induced abortion training would require affirmative, voluntary consent. The current, opt-out system makes abortion training the standard, mainstream curriculum. The only additional training this adds to the comprehensive OB/GYN education residents already receive (and did when the system was effectively opt-in prior to the policy change) is training

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in elective induced abortions, whose sole intent is to end the life of a preborn human being.<sup>i</sup>

While AAPLOG's work and request focuses on OB/GYN residency training, it is important to note that the Alliance Defending Freedom recently sent a letter to the Department of Health and Human Services regarding family medicine residency programs and whether such federally-funded programs are violating federal conscience protections by compelling residents to train in induced abortions.<sup>ii</sup>

At a time of worsening physician shortages and growing maternal healthcare deserts, Congress should not permit coercive training mandates that discourage talented students from entering obstetrics and gynecology. Protecting conscience rights in residency training helps preserve a diverse physician workforce. Importantly, this language request would not prohibit abortion training. Such training would still be available and accessible to residents who wish to participate. It would merely return to an opt-in framework where not all residents are expected and mandated to participate, and it would restore compliance with the federal Coats-Snowe Amendment.<sup>iii</sup>

AAPLOG thanks the Subcommittee for its consideration of this important request and for its commitment to protecting conscience rights in medical education.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Dr. Christina Francis  
CEO

AAPLOG Action (American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists)

<sup>i</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductive-health/data-statistics/abortion-surveillance-system.html>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://adfmedia.org/press-release/adf-urges-hhs-to-protect-conscience-rights-of-doctors-in-residency-programs/>

<sup>iii</sup> Opinion No. KP-0395, Office of Attorney General of Texas Ken Paxton from December 13, 2021.

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