THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 18, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

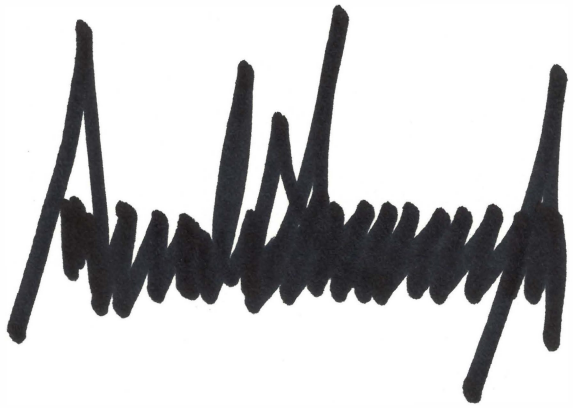
I am concerned that this year, the Congress may consider legislation that could substantially change Federal policies and laws on abortion, and allow taxpayer dollars to be used for the destruction of human life. Like several of my predecessors who served as President of the United States, I am writing to make sure that there is no misunderstanding of my views on these important issues.

As a previous President said, our Nation was founded on the belief that every human being has rights, dignity, and matchless value. Every child should be welcomed into life and protected in law. The advancement of science and medicine does not, and need never conflict with the ethical imperative to cherish and protect every life. In fact, advances in science have made it more possible than ever to see life developing at the earliest stages and underscore Americans' obligation to protect helpless and innocent life from destruction—whether it is in the womb or elsewhere. These issues are deeply emotional and are made even more complicated when the Congress compels American taxpayers to fund efforts that end human life.

As you know, there are many longstanding pro-life protections included in both spending bills and Federal authorizations. These include preventing taxpayer dollars from funding domestic and international abortions, embryo-destructive research, and assisted suicide. The important Hyde Amendment, which prohibits taxpayer funding for abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or where the life of the mother is endangered, is among these protections. Other examples include safeguards against coercive or involuntary family planning programs and nondiscrimination laws that protect the rights of healthcare providers and others who do not wish to be complicit in abortion or assisted suicide.

My Administration has the greatest respect for life. For example, we have issued regulations to disentangle Federal funding from abortion and abortion providers at home and abroad. We have also taken steps to enforce laws protecting conscience rights and governing Federal funding for abortion. We will continue to work tirelessly to implement commonsense pro-life policies.

It is alarming that the House of Representatives, in its short time under Democrat control this year, has already sought to reverse important pro-life protections. For example, H.R. 21, the "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019," which passed the House on January 3, 2019, would reverse a critical protection against taxpayer funding for the global abortion industry called the "Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance" policy.

As the House of Representatives conducts its business, I urge that it respect and continue these and other important pro-life protections. I believe it is the most basic duty of government to guard the innocent. With that in mind, I will veto any legislation that weakens current pro-life Federal policies and laws, or that encourages the destruction of innocent human life at any stage.

Sincerely,