

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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December 14, 2023

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

The Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs (Subcommittee) is writing to express support for the Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family. We are concerned by President Biden's decision to remove the United States from this accord that protects fundamental human rights and promotes the well-being of the unborn.¹ Supporting the Geneva Consensus Declaration aligns with the U.S. commitment to safeguard the rights of individuals, foster family values, and promote stewardship of foreign assistance. Therefore, we are requesting the U.S. rejoin this declaration and for the Department of State to suspend its practice of recommending other countries remove themselves from the Geneva Consensus Declaration.

The Geneva Consensus Declaration was signed on October 22, 2020, by a coalition of countries affirming their dedication to the protection of the family as the natural and fundamental unit of society.² The declaration emphasizes the importance of equality under the law for women, upholding the right to life, and affirms there is no international right to abortion.³ In a recent Universal Periodic Review of Burkina Faso on November 6, 2023, the Biden Administration's U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Geneva recommended Burkina Faso withdraw from the Geneva Consensus Declaration.⁴ The Biden Administration previously recommended that the Republic of Benin remove itself from the Geneva Consensus Declaration.⁵

The Subcommittee finds the Biden Administration's withdrawal and continuous opposition to this accord appalling, and several of us have co-sponsored legislation urging the

¹ Matthew Lee, *Biden Rescinds Abortion Restrictions on U.S. Foreign Aid*, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (Jan. 28, 2021).

² See Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family (Oct. 22, 2021), available at <https://www.theiwh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/GCD-Declaration-2021-2.pdf>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ News Release, U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, U.S. Dep't of State, U.S. Statement at the Universal Periodic Review of Burkina Faso (Nov. 6, 2023).

⁵ News Release, U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, U.S. Dep't of State, U.S. Statement at the Universal Periodic Review of Benin (Jan. 26, 2023).

The Honorable Antony Blinken

December 14, 2023

Page 2 of 2

United States to rejoin this historic declaration.⁶ We ask that the Department of State cease undermining the accord, and begin to take the necessary steps to endorse the Geneva Consensus Declaration once again. We believe that such support will further solidify the United States' dedication to the principles outlined in the declaration and will demonstrate our commitment to collaborating with the international community in promoting the well-being of individuals and families worldwide.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your continued efforts in upholding the values of every individual's right to life. The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X.

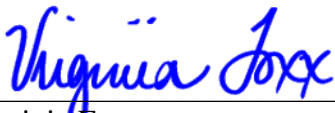
Sincerely,



Glenn Grothman
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security, the Border,
and Foreign Affairs



Paul A. Gosar D.D.S.
Member of Congress



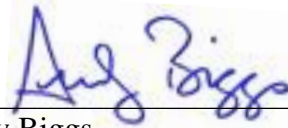
Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



Clay Higgins
Member of Congress



Pete Sessions
Member of Congress



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Robert Garcia, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs

⁶ Expressing Support for the Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family, H. Con. Res. 74, 118th Cong. § 1 (2023).