



DEMOCRATS FOR LIFE OF AMERICA

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www.democratsforlife.org

May 21, 2019

The Honorable Pramila Jayapal
1510 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Jayapal,

I am writing in response to your call to redefine what it means to be a Democrat and, specifically, your call to include abortion as a core Democratic value. As the executive director of Democrats For Life of America (DFLA), I disagree with an abortion litmus test, and here is why.

First, you have to understand why we are pro-life Democrats and why we remain in our Democratic Party despite repeated attacks, exclusion, and calls for our removal. We believe that the government has a responsibility to protect ALL those who need assistance. The following quote from former Vice President Hubert Humphrey sums up our belief perfectly. He said,

"It was once said that the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped."

Pro-life Democrats have varying reasons for why we include life in the womb as worthy of governmental protection and support, but we are united in supporting a robust social safety net and providing other support to families who need it. We oppose cuts to programs that provide assistance, and we support a living wage so that families can provide for their needs. We also believe that health care is a right. DFLA was the ONLY pro-life organization to support the Affordable Care Act, and we defended it as a pro-life accomplishment.

However, despite our agreement on 90 percent of issues, we are consistently told that we do not belong and cannot be "real Democrats." We are also told by the pro-life community that we do not belong there because we are Democrats. But we stay with our Democratic Party because we believe that, through support for pregnant women, both governmental support and private support, we can strive to make abortion the last resort instead of the first.

Our Democratic Party once stood to make abortion "safe, legal, and rare" – a position that pro-life Democrats believe is a good compromise and an inclusive position for our party. We believe that, by taking this stance again, the Democratic Party is the one that can lead by including people on both sides of the issue, working together on this and other issues to unite us.

**DFLA - The PRO-LIFE voice
within the Democratic Party**

Page 2

We should also keep in mind that an abortion litmus test could alienate African American and Hispanic communities. According to the YouGov Poll, 40 percent of Hispanics think that the Democratic National Committee should support only candidates who say that abortion should be ILLEGAL, and only 66 percent of African Americans support abortion rights.

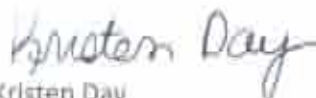
Lastly, we are a party of diversity and inclusion. We seek to include people who have been disenfranchised, those who have been left out, and those who believe that no one is fighting for them. Any effort to exclude people based on their beliefs – whether they be for scientific, religious, or personal reasons – goes directly against our big-tent-party policy. Limiting membership and inclusion in our Democratic Party will only cause our party to be smaller.

The effort to purge pro-life Democrats in blue districts neither advances nor strengthens our party. It serves only to tell a minority voice within the party that they are not welcome and to discourage them from supporting the Democratic Party.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this issue further. Hillary Clinton said we are stronger together. If we are going to continue to make gains, then we must work stronger together for a big tent that does not exclude anyone.

I can be reached at kdav@democratsforlife.org or (703)424-6663.

Sincerely,



Kristen Day
Executive Director
Democrats For Life

CC: Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House
Cheri Bustos, Chairwoman, DCCC