

## FACT SHEET: The Biden-Harris Administration Continues to Advance Gender Equity and Equality at Home and Abroad

Over the past three years, President Biden and Vice President Harris have leveraged the full force of the federal government to advance rights and opportunity for women and girls across the country and around the globe. From defending reproductive freedom, delivering the highest women's labor force participation and the narrowest gender pay gap on record, making historic investments in the care economy, and lowering drug prices for women on Medicare to fighting to end violence against women, advancing the human rights of women and girls globally, and promoting women's political participation and leadership, President Biden and Vice President Harris are committed to investing in the future of women and girls.

### ***Defending Reproductive Freedom***

At a time when women's reproductive freedom is under attack, President Biden and Vice President Harris are fighting to ensure that women across the country are able to make deeply personal health care decisions and access the reproductive health care they need. Since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, the President has continued to call on Congress to restore the protections of *Roe* in federal law, and has made it clear that he will sign legislation as soon as it reaches his desk. President Biden has also signed three Executive Orders and a Presidential Memorandum directing his Administration to protect access to reproductive health care, including abortion and contraception. He established the White House Task Force on Reproductive Healthcare Access to coordinate these efforts across agencies and mobilize the Administration to defend reproductive rights.

- **Protect Access to Medication Abortion.** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Department of Justice (DOJ) are protecting access to mifepristone—a safe and effective drug used in medication abortion that FDA first approved more than twenty years ago. The Administration is defending FDA's independent, expert judgment, including in a lawsuit before the U.S. Supreme Court that attempts to curtail access nationwide. In 2023, FDA took independent, [evidence-based action](#) to allow mifepristone to be prescribed by telehealth and sent by mail as well as to enable interested pharmacies to become certified to dispense the medication. As a result of the new pathway established by FDA, many pharmacies across the country—including major retail pharmacy chains—are now certified to dispense medication abortion, giving many women the option to pick up their prescription for medication abortion at a local, certified pharmacy just as they would for any other medication.
- **Defend Access to Emergency Abortion Care.** The Administration is committed to ensuring that all patients, including women who are experiencing pregnancy loss and other pregnancy-related emergencies, have access to the full rights and protections for emergency medical care afforded under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA)—including abortion care when that is the stabilizing treatment required. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [issued guidance](#) and Secretary Becerra [sent letters](#) to providers affirming the Administration's view that EMTALA preempts conflicting state law restricting access to abortion in emergency situations. DOJ has taken action to defend that interpretation before the Supreme Court, which is expected to issue its decision by June. To increase awareness of EMTALA and ensure that patients facing all types of medical emergencies receive the care to which they are entitled, HHS is providing informational resources, technical assistance, and trainings to educate

all patients about their rights and to help ensure hospitals meet their obligations under federal law.

- **Defend the Right to Travel.** On the day the Supreme Court overturned *Roe*, President Biden [reaffirmed](#) the Attorney General’s statement that women must remain free to travel safely to another state to seek the care they need. In November 2023, DOJ filed a [statement of interest](#) in two lawsuits challenging the Alabama Attorney General’s threat to prosecute people who provide assistance to women seeking lawful out-of-state abortions. DOJ explained that the threatened Alabama prosecutions infringe the constitutional right to travel and made clear that states may not punish third parties for assisting women in exercising that right. DOJ continues to monitor states’ efforts to restrict the constitutional right to travel across state lines to receive lawful health care.
- **Strengthen Access to Affordable, High-Quality Contraception.** In June 2023, the President [issued an Executive Order](#) directing agencies to consider actions to improve access and affordability for women with private health insurance; bolster access across federal health programs; promote access to over-the-counter contraception; and further support access for Service members, veterans, federal employees, and college students. To date, the Departments of the Treasury, Labor, and HHS have issued [new guidance](#) to support expanded coverage of a broader range of FDA-approved contraceptives at no cost under the Affordable Care Act and issued a [proposed rule](#) to strengthen access to contraception so all women with private health coverage who need and want contraception can obtain it without cost sharing. These agencies also [issued a Request for Information](#) to solicit public input on how to best ensure coverage and access to over-the-counter preventive services, including contraception, at no cost and without a prescription from a health care provider. In addition, the Administration has strengthened the Title X Family Planning Program; promoted access to contraception for Service members and their families and certain dependents of veterans; and convened leaders of postsecondary institutions, the private sector, and advocacy organizations to hear promising strategies for protecting and expanding access to contraception. Further, FDA approved the first daily oral contraceptive for over-the-counter use, which is now widely available in drug stores across the country.
- **Support Access to Fertility Care, Including IVF.** In the face of threats and extreme attacks on fertility services, the Administration has taken steps to support access to fertility care, including in vitro fertilization (IVF)—an important aspect of reproductive health care. The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs expanded eligibility for IVF services for certain Service members and veterans, helping them build their families. And the Office of Personnel Management significantly expanded access to IVF benefits and coverage for Plan Year 2024 to support Federal workers in growing their families and several health plan options will offer broader coverage of IVF-related services and benefits.
- **Safeguard the Privacy of Patients and Health Care Providers.** The Administration is committed to strengthening privacy protections for women and health care providers. HHS issued a rule to safeguard sensitive information related to reproductive health care under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HHS also issued a [how-to guide](#) on steps that consumers can take to better protect their data on personal cell phones or tablets and when using mobile health apps, like period trackers, which are generally not protected by HIPAA. The Federal Trade Commission [finalized](#) changes to the health breach notification rule to clarify its

applicability to health apps and other similar technologies and has taken several [enforcement actions](#) against companies for disclosing consumers' personal health information, including [highly sensitive reproductive health data](#), without permission. The Department of Education [issued guidance to over 20,000 school officials](#) to remind them of their obligations to protect student privacy under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and [issued a know-your-rights resource](#) to help students understand their privacy rights for health records at school. And the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) [launched a guide for consumers](#) on best practices for protecting their personal data, including geolocation data, on mobile phones and strengthened [data breach rules](#) to provide greater protections to personal data.

- **Protect Access to Reproductive Health Care for Veterans and Service Members.** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) revised its regulations to provide abortion counseling and, in certain circumstances, abortion care to veterans and VA beneficiaries. And the Department of Defense released [policies](#) to support Service members and their families' ability to travel for lawful non-covered reproductive health care, to bolster Service members' privacy, and to afford them the time and space needed to make personal health care decisions.
- **Partner with State Leaders on the Frontlines of Abortion Access.** The White House continues to [partner](#) with leaders on the frontlines of protecting access to abortion—both those fighting extreme state legislation and those advancing proactive policies to protect access to reproductive health care, including for patients who are forced to travel out of state for care. The Vice President has led these efforts, traveling to 20 states and meeting with more than 250 state legislators, health care providers, and advocates in the past year. And, on what would have been the 51st anniversary of *Roe*, the Vice President launched her nationwide Fight for Reproductive Freedoms tour to continue fighting back against extreme attacks throughout America.
- **Support Sexual and Reproductive Health Globally.** The United States remains resolutely committed to advancing and protecting sexual and reproductive health and rights around the world and is proud to remain the largest bilateral donor to global family planning assistance, a commitment spanning more than fifty years. With fiscal year (FY) 2023 funds, the United States is providing \$524 million in U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-directed bilateral family planning and reproductive health programming and is contributing \$32.5 million to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The President's [FY 2025 Budget](#) requests \$549 million for family planning and reproductive health programs through USAID and \$44.5 million for UNFPA. The Administration continues to support global sexual and reproductive health programs, including through comprehensive programming on voluntary family planning, maternal and child health, and prevention and response to gender-based violence.

### ***Improving Women's Health and Addressing Health Disparities***

The President and Vice President believe that health care is a right, not a privilege, and have expanded health care access for millions more Americans while also lowering health care costs. The President continues to build on, strengthen, and protect Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act, and has signed laws such as the American Rescue Plan Act and the Inflation Reduction Act to lower prescription drug costs and health insurance premiums. The President and First Lady are also fundamentally changing how we approach and fund women's health research to pioneer the next generation of

discoveries in women's health. And the Administration is improving maternal health care, including by extending postpartum Medicaid coverage.

- **Lower Drug Prices for Millions of Women.** The Administration is fighting to ensure that no American has to choose between paying for medications they need to live, or paying for other basic necessities. President Biden is taking on Big Pharma to lower prescription drug costs, saving millions of seniors money on health care and reducing the cost of insulin to \$35 per monthly prescription for people with Medicare. In addition, the President's [FY 2025 Budget](#) extends the \$35 cost-sharing cap for a month's supply of a covered insulin product to the commercial market. About 733,000 women enrolled in Medicare were taking insulin and would have benefited from the insulin cap if it had been in effect in 2020. The first ten drugs announced for Medicare price negotiation are used to treat many common diseases and conditions that affect women, including blood clots, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, heart failure, autoimmune conditions, and chronic kidney disease. Together, these drugs are taken by 9 million seniors, including 4.5 million women.
- **Lower Health Care Premiums under the Affordable Care Act.** More Americans have health insurance than under any other President, and women make up more than half of the record-breaking 21 million people with Affordable Care Act coverage for 2024. Thanks to the American Rescue Plan and Inflation Reduction Act, millions of women and working families are saving an average of \$800 per year on health insurance premiums. The Administration will continue fighting efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and return to the days when insurance companies had free rein to deny coverage based on preexisting conditions and charge women more than men.
- **Close Gaps in Women's Health Research.** Recognizing that research on women's health remains underfunded and understudied, President Biden [launched](#) the first-ever White House Initiative on Women's Health Research led by First Lady Jill Biden and the White House Gender Policy Council to spur innovation, unleash transformative investment to close research gaps, and improve women's health.
  - **Support Transformative Investments in Women's Health Research.** During his [State of the Union](#) address, the President called on Congress to make a bold, transformative investment of \$12 billion for women's health research. This investment would be used to create a Fund for Women's Health Research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to advance a cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research agenda and to establish a new nationwide network of research centers of excellence and innovation in women's health—which would serve as a national gold standard for women's health research across the lifespan.
  - **Catalyze Government-Wide Actions to Advance Research on Women's Health.** The President also issued an [Executive Order](#) that directed the most comprehensive set of executive actions ever taken to advance research on women's health, ensuring that women's health is integrated and prioritized across the federal research portfolio and budget and galvanizing new research on a wide range of topics, including women's midlife health. In addition, agencies—from the National Science Foundation to the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to the NIH—have taken more than 20 new actions and commitments that will advance women's health research. This includes an

[NIH-wide effort](#) to close gaps in women’s health research across the lifespan, which will initially be supported by \$200 million beginning in FY 2025 and will allow NIH to catalyze interdisciplinary research. And the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) [announced](#) its first-ever Sprint for Women’s Health and committed \$100 million for transformative investments in women’s health innovation. This new sprint will accelerate the next generation of discoveries—from early-stage proofs of concept to products that are ready to be commercialized.

- **Improve Maternal Health Outcomes.** Under the Vice President’s leadership, the Administration has taken steps to improve maternal health and eliminate racial disparities by reducing pregnancy-related complications and mortality, which disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and rural women.
  - **Address the Maternal Health Crisis.** The Administration continues to implement the White House [Blueprint for Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis](#), which includes 50 actions to improve maternal health. HHS has also launched a new [Birthing-Friendly designation](#) to identify hospitals and health systems that deliver high-quality, evidence-based maternity care; announced a new [Transforming Maternal Health Model](#) to help develop and implement a whole-person approach to care; and took action to [grow and support](#) the maternal health workforce.
  - **Help Women and Families Access Critical Maternal Health Services.** Since Vice President Harris issued a call to action in 2021, to date, [46 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands](#) have extended Medicaid postpartum coverage from two to 12 months of post-pregnancy care. This coverage option was first made possible by President Biden’s American Rescue Plan and then made permanent by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. In addition, four new states have adopted the Affordable Care Act’s expansion of Medicaid, covering over a million people, many for the first time. Comprehensive Medicaid coverage is critical to advancing maternal health equity for women across the country, and the Administration continues to encourage all states to expand Medicaid and extend Medicaid postpartum coverage so women across the country can get the care they need to stay healthy. The Administration has also [expanded](#) maternity care for veterans, who now have access to maternity care coordinators through 12 months postpartum, helping connect veterans with care after delivery, follow-up screenings, and mental health support.
- **Tackle the Mental Health Crisis.** As part of the President’s Unity Agenda, the Administration is [taking action](#) to transform how mental health is understood, accessed, treated, and integrated in and out of health care settings. Thanks to the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the Administration is delivering the largest investment in school-based mental health services ever, which will bring 14,000 new mental health professionals into schools across the country. We have delivered tens of billions to expand federal and state mental health and substance use services and taken steps to strengthen and diversify the mental health workforce. HHS also [launched](#) 988, the Nationwide Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, which anyone can call, text, or chat to be connected to a trained crisis counselor. Additionally, HHS is prioritizing maternal mental health, including the launch of the [National Maternal Mental Health Hotline](#)—1-833-TLC-MAMA—which has helped tens of thousands of perinatal women access needed support. The

Administration has also launched a [Task Force on Maternal Mental Health](#), and the Talking Postpartum Depression public education campaign and learning collaborative.

- **Address Girls' Risk of HIV/AIDS Globally.** The [DREAMS](#) (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe) public-private partnership—launched as part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in 2014—addresses key factors that render adolescent girls and young women particularly vulnerable to HIV. On International Day of the Girl in 2023, the Administration [announced](#) that PEPFAR would expand DREAMS to reach more adolescent girls and young women with HIV prevention services, investing approximately \$360 million to reach over 2.9 million girls and young women across 15 countries in the next year.
- **Improve Maternal Health Globally.** USAID's [maternal and child health and nutrition programs](#) have played a pivotal role in saving millions of lives by driving down mortality rates through improved health care access and delivery. In 2022, USAID helped 11.6 million women to give birth in facilities receiving U.S. government support and counseled 4.6 million women about maternal and child nutrition.
- **Invest in the Global Health Worker Initiative.** The Administration [launched](#) the Global Health Worker Initiative (GHWI), recognizing that a health workforce that is supported, equipped and protected to provide essential public health functions is integral to reclaiming lost ground from the COVID-19 pandemic and preparing for future health threats. Through the GHWI we are better aligning investments in health workers across the U.S. Government, building stronger partnerships on health workforce with bilateral partners, multilateral institutions, including the World Health Organization, and other philanthropic partners, and reorienting our global health programs toward cohesive efforts that build stronger and more resilient health systems. GHWI priorities are aligned with the first-ever [National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality](#) and the Administration's enduring commitment to workers' rights, in support of building the global care economy and care infrastructure, and strengthening women's economic security in the health workforce, including by addressing pay inequity, harassment, and other barriers to career advancement.

### ***Strengthening Women's Economic Security***

The Administration is investing in America's future by ensuring women have access to good jobs and safe workplaces free from discrimination. The President's economic agenda has led to historic gains in women's labor force participation and the narrowest gender pay gap on record. Globally, we are supporting women's economic security by promoting women's access to jobs in sectors critical to the future of our planet and closing the gender digital divide—a gap we commit to halve by 2030.

- **Achieved the Lowest Women's Unemployment Rate in 70 Years.** The Administration's economic plan led to a historic recovery in working-age women's labor force participation in the United States, bringing it to the highest it has ever been on record since 1948. Since President Biden took office in January 2021, the women's unemployment rate had its fastest calendar-year drop on record that year, dropping to the lowest annual unemployment rate in decades in 2023. Under the President's and Vice President's leadership, there has also a dramatic reduction in Black and Latina women's unemployment. In addition, there are now roughly 1.4 million more Hispanic women and more than 300,000 Black women employed than prior to the pandemic.

- **Ensure Women Have Access to Good-Paying, High-Quality Jobs.** The Administration’s once-in-a generation Investing in America agenda is creating millions of good-paying jobs, helping ensure that women, people of color, and other communities currently underrepresented in the industries of the future have equitable access to these jobs. For instance, the Department of Labor’s [Good Jobs Initiative](#) is dedicated to promoting equitable workforce development and ensuring workers have what they need to deliver on the President’s Investing in America agenda. The Department of Commerce launched the [Million Women in Construction](#) initiative, which calls on chip manufacturers, construction companies, and unions to bring one million women into the construction industry over the next decade, roughly doubling women’s representation in the industry. The Department of Labor launched the [Mega Construction Project Program](#), which fosters equal employment opportunities for qualified workers, including women, on certain federally funded construction projects. And the President issued a new [Executive Order](#) to expand and diversify registered apprenticeship programs, benefitting women and other underrepresented workers by increasing access to high-quality pathways to good-paying, family-sustaining jobs.
- **Advance Pay Equity for Federal Workers and Contractors.** President Biden and Vice President Harris know that closing wage gaps is critical to strengthening and growing the economy, and under their economic agenda, the gender pay gap is the narrowest on record. To advance pay equity within the federal workforce, the Office of Personnel Management published a [rule](#) ensuring that more than 80 federal agencies will no longer consider an individual’s non-federal pay when determining their salary. The consideration of compensation history in pay-setting decisions has exacerbated pay inequities, disproportionately harming women and people of color. Banning this practice is a proven way to curb pay discrimination that often follow workers from job to job. Separately, to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in federal contracting, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council issued a [proposal](#) to prohibit federal contractors and subcontractors from seeking and considering information about job applicants’ compensation history for employment decisions for personnel working on or in connection with a government contract. In addition, the proposal would require federal contractors and subcontractors to disclose expected salary ranges in job postings, a policy also shown to reduce pay inequities.
- **Lift the Burden of Student Debt.** From day one of his Administration, President Biden vowed to fix the student loan system and make sure higher education is a pathway to the middle class—not a barrier to opportunity. Already, the President has [cancelled](#) more student debt than any President in history, approving nearly \$160 billion in debt cancellation for 4.6 million borrowers through more than two dozen executive actions, and created the [SAVE plan](#), the most affordable student loan repayment plan ever. This life-changing relief is especially important for women who carry nearly two-thirds of all student loan debt.
- **Support Women-Owned Small Businesses.** Under this Administration, Small Business Administration (SBA)-backed loans to women-owned small businesses are up [more than 60 percent](#), totaling \$5.1 billion in lending to women-owned businesses in FY 2023. And women’s small business formation has surged during the Administration, substantially outpacing overall small business formation. We have invested \$70 million in the [Women Business Centers](#) (WBC) network, expanding it for the first time into all 50 states and tripling the number of WBCs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and other minority-serving institutions. Through the American Rescue Plan, the Administration also invested \$10

billion to help states, territories, and Tribal governments leverage tens of billions more in matching public and private dollars to support small businesses across the United States, with a particular focus on historically underserved entrepreneurs, including women business owners.

- **Ensure Pregnant and Postpartum Workers Have Workplaces Free from Discrimination.** The President signed into law bipartisan protections for pregnant and post-partum workers. The [Pregnant Workers Fairness Act \(PWFA\)](#) provides basic, long-overdue protections that promote safe, healthy workplaces free from discrimination. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) [issued](#) regulations implementing the PWFA to ensure pregnant and postpartum workers have access to common-sense, reasonable accommodations that enable them to stay in the workforce while pregnant or as a new mother. The President also signed the [Providing Urgent Maternal Protections \(PUMP\) for Nursing Mothers Act](#), which provides most nursing workers with the right to reasonable break time and a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion to express breast milk while at work.
- **Promote Women’s Economic Security Globally.** The President’s FY 2025 Budget requests over \$3 billion to advance gender equity and equality worldwide. The Administration has mobilized over \$2.9 billion in public and private resources to advance women’s economic security around the world. In 2021, the Administration established the [Gender Equity and Equality Action Fund](#) to advance economic security for women and girls and address barriers that limit their full economic participation. Through the Fund, which has invested \$200 million in direct resources in its first two years, the Administration has committed to three flagship public-private partnerships to tackle persistent barriers to women’s economic participation in the 21st century economy. These initiatives include:
  - **\$1.4 Billion to Support Women’s Participation in Green and Blue Industries.** Vice President Harris announced the [Women in the Sustainable Economy Initiative](#)—a public-private partnership between governments, the private sector, philanthropies, multilateral organizations, and civil society to promote women’s access to jobs in the green and blue industries of the future. To date, commitments to this critical initiative [total \\$1.4 billion](#), including more than \$600 million committed by the U.S. government.
  - **\$500 Million to Help Cut the Gender Digital Divide in Half by 2030.** In 2023, the United States secured an historic commitment in the G20 New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration and the APEC Leaders’ Golden Gate Declaration to cut the digital gender gap in half by 2030. To help reach this goal, we launched the [Women in the Digital Economy Initiative](#), a public-private partnership with more than \$515 million in commitments from governments, the private sector, and civil society to accelerate progress to close the gender digital divide and fully enfranchise women in our globalized, networked economy.
- **Support Job Creation for Women Globally.** In June 2022, Vice President Harris and the Partnership for Central America [launched](#) “In Her Hands,” a women’s economic empowerment initiative. By 2030, the initiative aims to support and provide opportunities for 5 million women across Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras through job creation, technical skilling, financial inclusion, textiles and apparel, and agricultural regeneration programs to pave the way for the next generation of leaders. To date, “In Her Hands” has mobilized \$113 million in private sector



funding to create jobs, provide technical skilling, and more, all to advance economic security for women.

### ***Investing in Care at Home and Abroad***

The Administration is taking action to increase access to affordable, high-quality care for families and to support caregivers and care workers. When we invest in care, we allow parents—especially women—to participate fully in the workforce; recognize the value of care workers and care providers, who are disproportionately women and women of color; and strengthen the economy. In 2021, the American Rescue Plan [helped](#) child care centers and family child care providers, which are mostly small businesses, remain open or reopen during the pandemic. In April 2024, the Administration secured an additional \$1 billion for the Child Care Development Block Grant and Head Start. President Biden also issued an historic [Executive Order](#) in April 2023, directing the most comprehensive set of executive actions any President has ever taken to expand access to affordable, high-quality care, and provide support for care workers and family caregivers.

- **Make High-Quality Child Care More Affordable.** The Administration is committed to ensuring that families have access to high-quality, affordable care. HHS finalized a [rule](#) strengthening the Child Care and Development Block Grant program and lowering child care payments for more than 100,000 families receiving federal child care assistance. Under this landmark rule, families will pay no more than 7% of income, saving families in states that do not yet cap co-payments over \$200 a month of average. In implementing the CHIPS and Science Act, the Department of Commerce [required](#) applicants for semiconductor incentives requesting over \$150 million in direct funding to submit plans to provide accessible, affordable, high-quality child care. This first-of-its kind commitment will help get more people—especially women—into good-paying manufacturing jobs, and help employers delivering major federal projects recruit and retain a diverse, skilled workforce.

The President’s [FY 2025 Budget](#) would create a historic new program under which working families would be guaranteed affordable, high-quality child care from birth until kindergarten, with most families paying no more than \$10 a day and the lowest income families paying nothing. The Budget also includes \$8.5 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, which will allow states to expand child care assistance and serve over 2 million low-income children.

- **Improve Long-Term Care and Support Family Caregivers.** This Administration is [committed](#) to protecting the health and dignity of older adults and people with disabilities. HHS issued [final rules](#) to ensure home care workers get a larger share of Medicaid payments and establish minimum staffing standards in nursing homes receiving Medicare and Medicaid funding. HHS has also taken steps to support family caregivers’ access to [training](#) and [beneficiary information](#) during the hospital discharge planning process, published the [Guiding and Improving Dementia Experience Model](#) to support people living with dementia and their caregivers, and announced [new funding opportunities](#) to develop new approaches to support family caregivers. And VA launched a [program](#) to provide mental health counseling services to family caregivers caring for our nation’s heroes.
- **Call for National, Comprehensive Paid Family and Medical Leave.** The President’s FY 2025 Budget also proposes to establish a national, comprehensive paid family and medical leave

program to ensure that all workers can take the time they need to bond with a new child; care for a seriously ill loved one; heal from their own serious illness; address circumstances arising from a loved one's military deployment; find safety from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; or grieve the death of a loved one. The Budget also provides funding to the Department of Labor for grants and technical assistance to support the development, improvement, and implementation of paid family and medical leave programs in states and localities.

- **Invest in Care Infrastructure and Support Caregivers and Care Workers.** The Administration is committed to raising the wages and quality of care worker jobs, and to investing in care infrastructure. In March 2024, SBA [announced](#) new funding opportunities to support small businesses in the child care sector as well as the creation of a child care business development guide, which will provide resources for child care businesses on starting and running a business throughout the business life cycle. In addition, SBA is launching a lender campaign to highlight the resources SBA has available to support small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses, including child care businesses, and will discuss additional reforms to support the growth of child care capacity across the country. The Administration is also taking steps to ensure Service members and military spouses—the vast majority of whom are women—have the support they need to care for themselves and their families while serving our country, including by [strengthening](#) hiring and retention of military spouses across the federal government, and expanding access to child care and other employment resources. And the Department of Labor has published [sample employment agreements](#) so domestic home care, child care, and long-term care workers and their employers can help ensure all parties better understand their rights and responsibilities.
- **Leveraged More Than \$500 Million in Projected Funding to Boost Women's Employment by Investing in Child Care.** Through the [Invest in Childcare Initiative](#)—a public-private partnership with more than \$500 million in leveraged funding between the World Bank, the governments of Canada, Germany, Australia, and the United States, domestic government resources, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and several others—the Administration is incentivizing investment in child care infrastructure in low- and middle- income countries, which will boost women's employment and overall economic growth.
- **Support Care Workers Globally.** At the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, USAID [announced](#) a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Ford Foundation and the Care for All with Respect and Equity (CARE) Fund to partner in advancing decent work for care workers worldwide. USAID, the Ford Foundation, and the CARE Fund are partnering to fund “Together We Care: Partnerships for Equitable Health Systems,” an activity implemented by UNI Global Union. This partnership builds on USAID's previously pledged \$4 million towards the activity, with commitments by the Ford Foundation and the CARE Fund of \$300,000 and \$500,000, respectively. “Together We Care: Partnerships for Equitable Health Systems” will advance women's economic security and resilient health and care systems. Its objectives are to strengthen community health and care workers' representation through unions and worker organizations; train women leaders; support advocacy for decent work and the formalization of informal workers; and address gender-based violence, harassment, and stigma. USAID is supporting programming in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, and the Philippines, with partners supporting additional programming in Brazil.

## ***Addressing Gender-Based Violence***

Ending gender-based violence has been a cornerstone of President Biden’s career—including his championing of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994 as a U.S. Senator. The President and Vice President remain committed to preventing and ending all forms of gender-based violence wherever it occurs—at home, in school, at work, in the military, in public spaces, and online. The President has signed historic legislation that dramatically increases the nation’s investments in ending gender-based violence, expands the reach of services to underserved communities, and helps end gun violence in our country. The Administration has also taken meaningful executive action and adopted a whole-of-government, intersectional approach to preventing and addressing sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, and other forms of gender-based violence that is guided by the first-ever [U.S. National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#).

- **Secure the Highest-Ever Funding Level to Support Implementation of VAWA.** President Biden signed into law the [VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022](#), critical legislation that expands access to safety and support for survivors and increases prevention efforts, and has secured the highest-ever funding levels for implementation of this transformative law. The Administration has swiftly implemented the new and strengthened VAWA, including targeted actions to support Native survivors through the expansion of special criminal jurisdiction of Tribal courts; expand VAWA housing protections; improve access to sexual assault medical forensic examinations; and enhance grant programs to support survivors, including survivors of technology-facilitated abuse and those in marginalized or underserved communities. For instance, the Administration has already taken critical steps to implement changes passed in the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022 by:
  - **Protecting and Supporting Survivors of Gender-Based Violence.** The Department of Justice [awarded](#) more than \$630 million in grants and cooperative agreements in FY 2023 to a wide range of organizations to serve survivors and [bolster coordinated community responses](#) aimed at ending domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. This included enhanced access to resources for underserved communities. In 2024, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded \$57 million in FY 2023 funds for Domestic Violence Bonus projects serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking and, in 2023, awarded \$10 million to provide VAWA training and technical assistance for HUD grantees. Additionally, HUD began allowing Homeless Continuum of Care recipients to implement the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022’s new definition of homeless that enables recipients to consider homeless people who are experiencing trauma or a lack of safety related to gender-based violence. HHS [announced](#) \$10 million in Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funding for new grants to build a stronger public health response for domestic violence and sexual assault survivors and their children, building on the nearly \$1 billion in supplemental funding for domestic violence and sexual assault services and support allocated through the American Rescue Plan. And the Department of Education, in collaboration with DOJ and HHS, launched the Task Force on Sexual Violence in Education, and solicited recommendations on many aspects of sexual violence prevention and response.
  - **Strengthening Gender-Based Violence Protections for Tribal Communities.** The VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022 [expanded](#) the recognition of special Tribal criminal

jurisdiction (STCJ) to cover non-Native perpetrators of sexual assault, child abuse, stalking, sex trafficking, and assaults on Tribal law enforcement officers on Tribal lands. DOJ identified and deployed resources to support Tribal implementation of STCJ, including by providing dedicated technical assistance funding. DOJ also [launched](#) a pilot program that will allow Alaska Native Tribes to exercise STCJ over non-Indian offenders for certain crimes, including crimes of sexual and domestic violence, and established an Alaska-specific Inter-Tribal Technical-Assistance Working Group through which Tribes can access technical assistance and peer-to-peer support. DOJ also issued an [interim final rule](#) to reimburse Tribes for expenses incurred in exercising STCJ, which permits DOJ to administer the new Tribal Reimbursement Program that was authorized in the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022. In 2023, DOJ [awarded](#) \$68 million in grants to support Native communities to provide services and promote justice for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and trafficking.

- **Addressing Online Harassment and Abuse and Combatting Cybercrimes Against Individuals.** The VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022 newly authorized two grant programs to address cybercrimes against individuals, which are being implemented by DOJ in FY 2024. The National Resource Center on Cybercrimes Against Individuals will provide information, training, and technical assistance to improve the capacity of individuals, organizations, governmental entities, and communities to prevent, enforce, and prosecute cybercrimes against individuals, including the non-consensual distribution of intimate images and cyberstalking. The Local Law Enforcement Grants for Enforcement of Cybercrimes Program will support jurisdictions in providing training for state, Tribal, and local law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges; enforcing laws that prohibit cybercrimes against individuals; establishing local task forces; and acquiring computer equipment to investigate these crimes. DOJ is also working to raise awareness through United States Attorneys' Offices and national legal and service organizations about the new federal civil cause of action for the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, passed into law in the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022.
- **Promoting Prevention and Strengthening Services for Survivors of Sexual Assault.** The VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022 improves prevention and response to sexual violence, including through increased support for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Rape Prevention and Education Program and Sexual Assault Services Program and enactment of the Fairness for Rape Kit Backlog Survivors Act, which requires state victim compensation programs to allow sexual assault survivors to file for compensation without being unfairly penalized due to rape kit backlogs. DOJ awarded \$51.8 million—a nearly 45% increase in funding from the previous year—to provide victims of sexual assault with services in every state and the District of Columbia, as well as American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.
- **Expanding Pathways to Justice.** The VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022 authorized a pilot Program on Restorative Practices that directs the Office on Violence Against Women to award grants to develop and implement a program, or to assess best practices, for restorative practices to prevent or address domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking; training on restorative practices; and evaluation of

restorative practices. DOJ has announced three technical assistance providers under this initiative and is soliciting proposals for [evaluation](#) and for pilot sites.

- **Strengthen Title IX Protections.** The Department of Education [amended](#) its regulations under Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in federally-funded education programs or activities. The new regulations advance Title IX’s promise of an education free from sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment and sexual violence. Under the regulations, students and employees will receive appropriate support as needed to access equal educational opportunities and schools will have fair procedures in place to investigate and resolve complaints of sex discrimination.
- **Help Keep Guns Out of the Hands of Domestic Abusers.** President Biden signed the historic Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the most significant legislation to reduce gun violence in nearly 30 years, and established the first-ever White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention to lead the Administration’s efforts to end our nation’s gun violence epidemic. The law narrowed the “boyfriend loophole” to help keep guns out of the hands of convicted dating partners, invested \$250 million in community-based violence intervention programs, and provided \$750 million for states to implement crisis interventions, such as red flag laws. In March 2024, the Vice President [announced](#) the launch of the first-ever National Extreme Risk Protection Order Resource Center to support the effective implementation of state red flag laws. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is actively reporting denied transactions of firearms purchases to state, local, and Tribal law enforcement within 24 hours, helping to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and fully implementing the National Instant Criminal Background Check System Denial Notification Act included in the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022. And DOJ is defending the constitutionality of a federal law that helps keep guns out of the hands of individuals subject to domestic violence protective orders—a commonsense gun safety law that has been on the books for nearly 30 years—at the Supreme Court.
- **Implement Historic Military Justice Reforms to Better Protect Survivors.** The Administration is removing barriers to women’s advancement, opportunity, and well-being in the U.S. military, including by addressing sexual assault, domestic violence, and sexual harassment in the force. One of President Biden’s earliest acts in office was to call for the establishment of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military, to take bold action to strengthen accountability for sexual violence in the military and inform bipartisan reforms to the military justice system. In July 2023, President Biden signed an [Executive Order](#) to implement these historic, bipartisan reforms to the military justice system, transferring key decision-making authorities from commanders to specialized, independent military prosecutors in cases of sexual assault, domestic violence, murder, and other serious offenses by amending the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
- **Ensure Effective Police Responses to Gender-Based Violence.** DOJ released [updated guidance](#) to help law enforcement agencies recognize, mitigate, and prevent gender and other forms of bias from compromising the response to, and investigation of gender-based violence, including sexual assault and domestic violence. DOJ is also implementing a newly authorized program to improve [trauma-informed, victim-centered law enforcement responses](#) to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and a special initiative to [enhance investigation and prosecution](#) of these crimes.

- **Help Protect Survivor Privacy.** The FCC issued [new rules](#) to implement the Safe Connections Act—a law signed by President Biden in 2022—that allows a survivor of domestic abuse to separate a mobile phone line from an account shared with an abuser. The new rules will help enhance privacy for survivors of domestic violence and help survivors of gender-based violence maintain critical connections with friends, family, and support networks. FCC also [called on](#) auto manufacturers and wireless service providers to help protect survivors from the misuse of connected car tools by abusers by helping ensure that smart car services are not being used to stalk, harass, or intimidate survivors of gender-based violence. President Biden also signed the [Joint Consolidation Loan Separation Act](#), which allows survivors of domestic violence and others who have faced economic abuse to sever joint student loan debt.
- **Strengthen Protections for Survivors of Sexual Assault and Harassment in the Workplace.** President Biden signed into law new protections to support survivors and address sexual assault and sexual harassment in the workplace. The bipartisan Ending Forced Arbitration of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Act empower survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment at work by providing survivors a choice to go to court instead of being forced into arbitration. And the Speak Out Act enables survivors to speak out about workplace sexual assault and harassment by prohibiting the enforcement of pre-dispute nondisclosure and non-disparagement clauses regarding allegations of sexual harassment or assault. President Biden also issued a [Presidential Memorandum](#) directing the Office of Personnel Management to provide recommendations regarding federal employees’ access to paid leave for purposes related to seeking safety and recovering from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking—including to obtain medical treatment, seek assistance from service organizations, seek relocation, and take legal action. The Department of Labor continues to oversee the Fostering Access, Rights and Equity Grant opportunity, which assists underserved and marginalized low-income women workers who have been impacted by gender-based violence and harassment, and helps them understand and access their employment rights, services, and benefits. And EEOC issued [new resources](#) to help federal agencies and employers prevent and remedy harassment, including sexual harassment, and create respectful workplaces.
- **Address Gender-Based Violence in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities.** In addition to action taken to implement the VAWA Reauthorization Act of 2022, President Biden issued an [Executive Order](#) directing federal agencies to address the crisis of missing or murdered Indigenous peoples, which significantly impacts women, girls, LGBTQI+ people in the community, and Two-Spirit Native Americans. The Administration has also continued to [implement](#) the Not Invisible Act of 2019, which established the [Not Invisible Act Commission](#) which provided [recommendations](#) to improve the federal government’s efforts to address violent crime and the high rates of people reported missing in Native communities. Additionally, the United States [relaunched](#) the North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls, in collaboration with the governments of Canada and Mexico, and with the participation of Indigenous women leaders from all three countries.
- **Continue to Implement the First-Ever U.S. National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.** The first-ever [National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), issued in May 2023, is a comprehensive, government-wide plan to prevent and address sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, and other forms of gender-based violence. Building on existing federal initiatives, the National Plan provides a framework for strengthening ongoing Administration-wide action and interagency collaboration, and for informing new research, policy development, program

planning, service delivery, and other efforts across each of seven strategic pillars—from prevention to economic security and housing stability to online safety. Development of the National Plan was guided by the lessons learned and progress made as the result of tireless and courageous leadership from survivors, advocates, researchers, policymakers, and other dedicated professionals and community members who lead prevention and response efforts.

- **Issue Sanctions to Hold Perpetrators Accountable for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.** In 2022, President Biden issued an historic [Presidential Memorandum on Promoting Accountability for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence](#) directing federal agencies to marshal sanctions authorities to promote justice and accountability specifically for conflict-related sexual violence. The Administration has since issued two sets of sanctions against perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence around the globe—from South Sudan to Iraq to Haiti. The first set was [released](#) in June 2023, marking the first time that a dedicated focus on conflict-related sexual violence has led to the imposition of sanctions. The second set was [announced](#) in December 2023 against thirteen targets from four countries for their connection to acts of sexual violence—the largest set of financial sanctions and visa restrictions the United States has issued against individuals connected to this abhorrent human rights abuse.
- **Address Online Harassment and Abuse in the U.S. and Globally.** Preventing and addressing online harassment and abuse is an Administration priority that cuts across our domestic and foreign policies. In June 2022, President Biden established the [White House Task Force to Address Online Harassment and Abuse](#), which has integrated a focus on preventing and responding to gender-based online harms across the federal government. To strengthen support for survivors in domestically and globally, the Administration has:
  - **Launched the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse.** By [founding and co-leading](#) the 14-country Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse, the Administration has advanced global policies to address online safety for women and girls by shaping a range of multilateral policy instruments tackling online harms through the G7, G20, APEC, and UN. The Administration has also invested at least \$15 million in targeted funding to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence and counter its chilling effects on women leaders and democratic participation as part of our emphasis on supporting democracies globally, including through new initiatives to provide support to women leaders who have experienced extreme threats or forms of online violence.
  - **Support Survivors of Image-Based Sexual Abuse.** DOJ bolstered its efforts to combat technology-facilitated gender-based violence by [funding](#) the first-ever national helpline for survivors of image-based sexual abuse, operated by the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative. This new helpline and online safety center will significantly expand support to survivors of online harassment and abuse, meeting the rising need for services related to the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. Since 2022, DOJ has disseminated over \$15 million in funding to victim service providers to prioritize online abuse and harassment and provide services to victims. The President also directed his Administration to address technology-facilitated gender-based violence in tackling the harms posed by artificial intelligence, including through key actions to address deepfake image-based sexual abuse in his [Executive Order](#) on artificial intelligence.

- **Combat Human Trafficking.** The Administration released an updated [National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking](#) laying out an integrated federal response to human trafficking. Since then, DOJ has disseminated over \$190 million in funding to combat human trafficking; provide supportive services to trafficking victims throughout the United States; develop timely training and resources for the anti-trafficking field; and conduct research into the nature and causes of labor and sex trafficking. DOJ also released updated [guidelines](#) that include enhanced protections for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking and for other vulnerable victims. And in February 2024, HHS released a National Human Trafficking Prevention Framework, a resource for organizations, communities, and governments seeking to strengthen efforts to prevent human trafficking.
- **Continue to Implement an Updated Global Strategy to Address Gender-Based Violence.** Over the last two fiscal years, the United States maintained the highest-ever level of investment—\$250 million—to address gender-based violence globally. This work is guided by the [U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally](#). In the third and most recent iteration of the Strategy [released](#) in 2022, the Administration is taking decisive action to further our commitment to prevent and respond to gender-based violence globally through programming, policy, and diplomatic efforts. We’ve also made updates to address 21<sup>st</sup> century threats, such as online harassment and abuse, and the ways in which climate change exacerbates the risk of gender-based violence.

### ***Promoting Women’s Representation, Leadership, and Political Participation***

As Vice President Harris has said, “the status of women is the status of democracy.” We know that the status of women and the stability of nations are inextricably linked and that wherever the rights of women and girls are under threat, so, too, are democracy, peace, and stability. The Administration is committed to defending women’s rights and elevating women’s civic and political participation and leadership at home and abroad—that’s why President Biden [established](#) the first-ever White House Gender Policy Council and why the Council developed the first-ever [National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality](#) to guide the Administration’s work.

- **Assemble the First-Ever Gender-Balanced Cabinet in Our Nation’s History.** The Administration reached gender parity in the Cabinet for the first time ever, thanks to President Biden’s commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in his appointments to the Cabinet and across the federal government. The President has appointed a record number of women and people of color—including the first woman to serve as Treasury Secretary, the first woman to serve as Director of National Intelligence, the first Native American woman to serve in the Cabinet, and the first openly transgender, Senate-confirmed federal official.
- **Appoint Judges Who Reflect the Diversity of Our Country.** President Biden has appointed a historically diverse group of federal judges against the backdrop of a closely divided Senate. The President continues to [nominate](#) women and men to the federal bench who are committed to the rule of law and who reflect the diversity of our country. They come from every corner of the legal profession—prosecutors, defense attorneys, civil rights lawyers, labor lawyers, and advocates for women’s reproductive freedoms. More than 65% are women, and 65% are people of color. And this Administration has confirmed more Black women to life-tenured federal judgeships than any previous Administration in history—including our nation’s first Black woman on the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.



- **Fight for Gender Equality Under the Law.** The Administration steadfastly supports the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and President Biden will continue to call on Congress to act immediately to recognize the ratification of the ERA. President Biden also continues to call on Congress to pass the Equality Act, which would provide long overdue civil rights protections on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- **Strengthen the Federal Government’s Recognition of Women’s History.** President Biden signed an [Executive Order](#) strengthening the National Park Service’s recognition of women’s history, helping to increase the representation of women’s history in sites across America and honor the legacy and contributions of women and girls to our country. The Executive Order directs the Department of the Interior to assess the state of women’s representation in the National Park Service to determine which existing sites are significant to women’s history; through the National Park Service, to conduct the first-ever comprehensive review, called a theme study, of women’s history; and solicit recommendations from the National Park System Advisory Board on opportunities to improve the recognition of women and girls across the National Park System. Philanthropic partners committed [more than \\$3 million](#) to advance this work.
- **Break Barriers for Service Women.** President Biden has eliminated obstacles to women’s military service, including by advancing historic military justice reforms; updating military hair, dress, and fitness standards; and expanding parental leave policies. Women commanders have also risen to unprecedented ranks, including Admiral Lisa Franchetti, the first woman to serve as the Chief of Naval Operations and on the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Admiral Linda Fagan, the first woman to hold the rank of four-star admiral and serve as Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard and Service Chief of any U.S. military service.
- **Advance Women’s Political and Civic Participation Globally.** Since President Biden launched the [Summit for Democracy](#) in 2021, the U.S. government has invested more than \$45 million in programs to dismantle barriers to women’s political and civic participation, build the pipeline of women leaders, and promote the role of women in democracy. Since [announcing](#) the Advancing Women’s and Girls’ Civic and Political Leadership Initiative at the first Summit for Democracy, USAID has allocated over \$15 million in nine focus countries to build and sustain women’s participation in political and civic engagement. Subject to the availability of funds, the Department of State is working with Congress to invest an additional \$1.7 million for the SHE WINS [initiative](#), a nearly \$10 million program that advances the leadership of local women and women-led civil society organizations to address peace and security challenges in their communities. Since the first Summit for Democracy, SHE WINS has initiated projects in six countries.
- **Promote Women’s Participation in Peace and Security Efforts.** The President and Vice President have made historic advances in strengthening women’s meaningful participation in national security, defense, and political leadership and reaffirmed that commitment with the release of the [2023 Women, Peace, and Security \(WPS\) Strategy and National Action Plan](#). The Administration [announced](#) key actions, including the State Department’s award of approximately \$2 million in supplemental funding to support survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence in Ukraine. The Department of State also [announced](#) an award of approximately \$500,000 to provide technical assistance to WPS Centers of Excellence, which will strengthen relationships and facilitate consultations between governments and civil society stakeholders to develop strategies, approaches and solutions to

implementing WPS principles in practice. The project will also leverage networks of WPS experts and leaders to foster learning, deepen collaboration, and raise awareness of WPS issues through existing and future WPS Centers in Kosovo, Colombia, and Indonesia.

- **Promote Efforts to End Child Marriage Globally.** On International Day of the Girl in 2023, the Administration [announced](#) that USAID will invest \$42 million and the Department of State will program \$2.45 million to prevent and respond to child, early, and forced marriage globally. These programs will focus on equipping girls and young women with education and workforce readiness skills; mitigating harmful effects of child marriage through education, health, legal, and economic support; and raising awareness of the risks and harms associated with child marriage. In addition, for the first time, the United States will contribute to the United Nations Children’s Fund–UNFPA Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which works in 12 countries in Africa and South Asia to promote the rights of adolescent girls.

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