

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR: SYLVIA MATTHEWS
JOHN PODESTA
RAHM EMANUEL
JOHN HILLEY
MELANNE VERVEER
VICKI RADD
CHUCK RUFF

FROM: BRUCE REED
ELENA KAGAN

SUBJECT: LATE TERM ABORTION LETTER

Attached is a draft letter from the President stating his support for the Daschle and Feinstein amendments. Assuming the President signs off, we recommend sending the letter as soon as possible.

Dear Senators Daschle and Feinstein:

I am writing to express support for your amendments prohibiting late-term abortions. If Congress were to substitute either of these amendments for the current H.R. 1122, I would sign the legislation.

As you know, I have long opposed late-term abortions, and I continue to do so except where necessary to save the life of a woman or prevent serious harm to her health. When I was Governor of Arkansas, I signed into law a bill that barred third-trimester abortions, with an appropriate exception for life or health. And last year, I made clear that I would sign such a bill at the federal level.

Your amendments, though differing in detail, both meet the standards I have set for such legislation. The amendments contain exceptions that will adequately protect the lives and health of the small group of women in tragic circumstances who need an abortion at a late stage of pregnancy to avert death or great injury. At the same time, the amendments prohibit any late-term abortions performed for elective reasons. This balance is an appropriate one, which I -- and, I believe, most Americans -- would gladly make the nation's law.

Sincerely,