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CONTACT:
Rachael Lorenzo
Indigenous Women Rising
505-918-6411
indigenouswomenrising@gmail.com
IWRising.org

DCCC Chairman announces “no litmus” test on abortion for Democratic candidates

Indigenous Women Rising Calls on Ben Ray Lujan to Protect Native Women, Retract Recent Statements on Abortion

Albuquerque, NM, August 2, 2017--Congressman Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Chair of the DCCC, told The Hill on Monday this week that in order to take back control of the House in 2018, there will be no litmus test on abortion for Democratic candidates seeking financial support from the DCCC. Indigenous Women Rising calls on the Congressman to retract his statement.

“This political shift in the DCCC is dangerous for all women across the country,” said Rachael Lorenzo, founder of Indigenous Women Rising. “Clearly, Congressman Lujan is out of touch with the needs of women and our communities, especially Indigenous communities.”

According to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), 56.1% of American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) women have experienced sexual assault, a rate that is significantly higher than other groups in the United States.

“Our Indigenous communities and families already have very limited access to the full range of reproductive health care, including abortion, and our families need representatives who understand the complexities of our access to quality healthcare,” continued Lorenzo. “There is a long and sad history of Indigenous women of not having the right to govern their own bodies, including forced sterilization and access to abortion. That Congressman Lujan would sacrifice the gains for women and what we thought were Democratic values for the sake of winning districts is shameful and a losing strategy.”

Chairman Lujan is already facing significant backlash from Democratic women, especially in New Mexico -- a state that has led the way for protecting access to reproductive health services, including abortion.

“Indigenous Women Rising will fight for Indigenous families, families in rural communities, and immigrant families to have the equitable access to a full range of reproductive healthcare, including abortion,” said Lorenzo. “We need representatives who respect the hard decisions our families make about abortion and respect our bodily autonomy. Our fight for quality healthcare should not come at the expense of electing anti-choice Democratic candidates.”

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[Indigenous Women Rising](#) is a growing collective of indigenous women that centers indigenous women and families in reproductive justice movements, dialogue, policies, and culture shifts. Visit us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).