



Anti-Reproductive Rights Trump Administration Officials Are On The Short List For HHS Secretary Alex Azar's Replacement

April 2020: White House Officials Reportedly Weighing A Plan To Replace HHS Secretary Alex Azar

Politico: Azar's Potential Replacements Include White House Coronavirus Coordinator Deborah Birx, Medicare Chief Seema Verma, And Deputy HHS Secretary Eric Hargan. "White House officials are weighing a plan to replace Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, according to four people familiar with the discussions. Among the names on the short list to replace Azar are White House coronavirus coordinator Deborah Birx, Medicare chief Seema Verma and deputy HHS Secretary Eric Hargan, said the four people familiar with the talks." [[Politico, 4/25/20](#)]

One Pick For Azar's Position Is Deborah Birx, Response Coordinator For the White House Coronavirus Task Force And U.S. Global Aids Coordinator & U.S. Special Representative For Global Health Diplomacy, State Department

Prior To Her Current Roles, Birx — An Experienced Public Health Official — Has Worked Under Republican And Democratic Administrations

Birx Worked With George W. Bush On AIDS Relief. "She's worked closely with three U.S. presidents — and was dogged in getting George W. Bush's attention. When Bush announced his President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in 2003, Birx flew back from Kenya and waited outside of the then-director of the Office of National AIDS Policy's town house for almost a week to get a meeting with him. She had been working on HIV vaccine research in Africa for almost six years at that point. So she showed him a 180-slide PowerPoint presentation 'until he agreed ... to let the Army also be part of PEPFAR,' she told a George W. Bush Presidential Center podcast in September. 'I was not leaving his office, and so I wore him down.'" [[MarketWatch, 4/25/20](#)]

Birx Was Ambassador-At-Large And Global AIDS Coordinator Under President Obama To Oversee The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR. "Birx was later appointed ambassador-at-large and global AIDS coordinator by President Barack Obama, and she has overseen PEPFAR at the State Department for the past six years." [[MarketWatch, 4/25/20](#)]

Birx Is A Physician And Trained Immunologist With Years Of Experience Combating HIV/AIDS Overseeing PEPFAR. "The best way to understand what Birx brings to the fight against covid-19 is to understand how she's fought the battle against global AIDS. The fact that

she's a physician and a trained immunologist who has run vaccine trials is key, but so is her eye for detail, her willingness to take on scutwork, and her determination to stay on the job. She's remained with PEPFAR even when some said she was compromising herself, and has gotten results, in terms of lives saved and infections averted. If she hadn't had that experience, she might not have been prepared for this new role. Persisting in the face of criticism — some of it personal and deeply gendered — is part of the job description for much of her résumé. This time it could be her downfall, or it could be the country's salvation." [[Washington Post, 3/26/20](#)]

Prior To Working At The State Department, Birx Was A Doctor In The Military And AIDS Researcher At CDC

Birx Was A Doctor In The Military And AIDS Researcher At CDC. "After completing her training, Birx worked as a doctor in the military and continued her HIV research. From the military, Birx went to the CDC, heading its Global AIDS Program." [[Washington Post, 3/26/20](#)]

Under The Trump Administration, Birx Leads HIV/AIDS And Global Health Diplomacy At The State Department; The White House Tapped Her To Work On COVID-19 In February 2020

During The Trump Administration, Birx Has Led The Government Response To COVID-19. "Now she is also aiding the government response to the coronavirus under the Trump administration. Vice President Pence has described her as his 'right arm' in that role." [[MarketWatch, 4/25/20](#)]

Birx's Portfolio At The State Department Includes Responding To Infectious Disease Threats. "Ambassador-at-Large, Deborah L. Birx, M.D., is the Coordinator of the United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS and U.S. Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy. Ambassador Birx is a world-renowned medical expert and leader in the field of HIV/AIDS. Her three-decade-long career has focused on HIV/AIDS immunology, vaccine research, and global health. As the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Ambassador Birx oversees the implementation of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease in history, as well as all U.S. Government engagement with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Serving as the U.S. Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy, she aligns the U.S. Government's diplomacy with foreign assistance programs that address global health challenges and accelerate progress toward: achieving an AIDS-free generation; ending preventable child and maternal deaths; and preventing, detecting, and responding to infectious disease threats." [[State.gov, accessed 4/27/20](#)]

- **Birx Has Held Her Current Position At The State Department Since April 2014.** [[State.gov, accessed 4/27/20](#)]

In Her Role At The State Department, Birx Designed And Implemented A Program Called DREAMS Partnership To Ensure Women And Girls Have Access To Health Care, Which Has Included Expanding Access To Reproductive Health Care....

Birx Has Implemented The DREAMS Partnership To Successfully Lower HIV Infections Among Adolescent Girls And Young Women In Africa — Despite The Trump Administration's Efforts To Curtail Reproductive Health

Birx’s Program Put “Unprecedented Resources Towards Girls And Women” Despite Anti-Abortion Republicans Policing PEPFAR’s Funding. “In many of these [African] countries [where PEPFAR works], rates of new HIV infections have dropped in recent years among the general population. In some places, they have also dropped among adolescent girls and young women, progress that PEPFAR attributes to a program called the DREAMS Partnership, which Birx and Achrekar started designing even before they arrived at the office of the global AIDS coordinator. They talked to everyone they could about what programs and services could be used to reduce the alarmingly high rates of HIV among young African women. The initiative they created put unprecedented resources toward girls and women, even though Republicans have policed PEPFAR’s payouts for such work since its inception, convinced that anything related to women’s health is code for abortion.” [[Washington Post, 3/26/20](#)]

DREAMS Partnership Is A Public-Private Partnership Through Which PEPFAR Has Successfully Worked With Local Governments To Provide PrEP And Reproductive Health Care

PEPFAR Launched The Public-Private Partnership Under The Obama Administration To Reduce HIV/AIDS Among Adolescent Girls And Young Women. “HIV risk remains unacceptably high among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in southern and eastern Africa, reflecting structural and social inequities that drive new infections. In 2015, PEPFAR (the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) with private-sector partners launched the DREAMS Partnership, an ambitious package of interventions in 10 sub-Saharan African countries. DREAMS aims to reduce HIV incidence by 40% among AGYW over two years by addressing multiple causes of AGYW vulnerability. This protocol outlines an impact evaluation of DREAMS in four settings.” [[BMC Public Health, 7/25/18](#)]

DREAMS Works To Provide Health Services Including Youth-Friendly Sexual And Reproductive Health Care — “Targeted Interventions” Birx Is A Proponent Of. “To take on this population in force, a trio of funders in 2014 launched a program called DREAMS, or Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe women. The \$280 million initiative is funded by PEPFAR, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Nike Foundation. Related efforts aim to strengthen families, extend the years girls remain in school, provide youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health care, and mobilize communities to help change behavioral expectations. Birx noted previous targeted interventions have had success against HIV, such as those aggressively treating infected pregnant women and their newborns with antiretroviral therapy. Health systems strengthening is also critical, she said.” [[FIC.NIH.gov, February 2016](#)]

In Countries Including Zimbabwe, The DREAMS Partnership Has Entailed Working With Local Governments On Providing HIV Testing, STI Treatment, Family Planning, And Condoms. “The Zimbabwe evaluation will capitalise on a national programme that provides HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health services to female sex workers (FSW) in Zimbabwe, known as “Sisters with a Voice”. ‘Sisters’ began in 2009 and provides free access to HIV testing, STI treatment, family planning, HIV prevention education, condoms and legal services to over 65,000 women across 36 sites [[16](#)]. Around 40% of FSW accessing the programme are younger than 25 years. The evaluation will include six districts in which the Sisters programme is active: two in which DREAMS+PrEP are delivered (Bulawayo and Mutare) and four comparison sites in which no DREAMS interventions are planned (Karoi, Chinhoyi, Zvishavane and Kwekwe).” [[BMC Public Health, 7/25/18](#)]

...However, Birx Also Hired Anti-LGBTQ Activist Anita Smith Of Children’s AIDS Fund International — A Controversial Organization That Has Received PEPFAR Funding And Which Birx Was Once A Board Member Of — As Consultant To Employ Abstinence Efforts As A Part Of PEPFAR’s Work

Despite PEPFAR’s Work That Has Expanded Reproductive Health Care, Under The Trump Administration, Birx’s Office Made A Hire To Work On Abstinence

Birx Hired Anita Smith To Work As A PEPFAR Consultant Specifically On Abstinence Efforts In 2018. “Even Smith’s wife, who has had her own high-profile activism over the years, is working on abstinence efforts within the administration. Anita Smith was hired recently as a part-time PEPFAR consultant by one of the couple’s longtime allies.” [[Washington Post, 8/17/18](#)]

Birx’s Office Said Smith’s Hiring Was Part Of A Strategy To Implement Prevention Programs On Decision-Making Around Whether To “Delay, Abstain, Or Protect.” “Smith’s hiring earlier this year was part of a strategy to improve prevention programs aimed at preteen girls, including support for “decision-making around whether to delay, abstain or protect,” according to a statement from Birx’s office.” [[Washington Post, 8/17/18](#)]

Guttmacher Institute On The Hiring: “The Administration Is Trying To Put Sweeteners In There For Religious Conservatives.” “The administration is trying to put sweeteners in there for religious conservatives,” said Heather Boonstra, director of public policy at the Guttmacher Institute, a nonprofit focused on reproductive health. “It’s not as if these concepts are a problem if they are included as part of a whole array of programs. The concern is that these changes are opening the door for a greater number of programs that focus solely on abstinence.” [[Washington Post, 8/17/18](#)]

Birx Hired The Co-Founder Of The Anti-LGBTQ, Anti-Abortion Children’s AIDS Fund, Of Which Birx Was Once A Board Member

Smith Is Co-Founder Of The Children’s AIDS Fund, Of Which Birx Was Once A Board Member. “Anita Smith is now a consultant within PEPFAR to Deborah Birx, a physician and ambassador at large who oversees the program’s estimated \$5 billion annual budget. Birx is also a former board member of Children’s AIDS Fund International and served until she was hired by the CDC in 2005, a PEPFAR spokesman said.” [[Washington Post, 8/17/18](#)]

Birx Said That She Became Involved With The Organization Through A Christmas-Gift Wrapping Initiative For Those With HIV. “Birx’s statement explained her connection to the couple, noting she became involved in the children’s organization through an annual Christmas event of gift-wrapping presents for families affected by HIV. ‘When they asked me to join their board, I did so to show my support for the concept of services to others in need,’ she said.” [[Washington Post, 8/17/18](#)]

The Children’s AIDS Fund (CAF) Has Received Funding From HHS And PEPFAR Under The Obama And Trump Administrations

CAF Has Received Funding Aimed At Combating AIDS For Years. “In July, I reported that, despite promises President Obama made on the campaign trail, the federal government was still providing millions of dollars in grants for HIV-prevention programming to anti-gay, anti-

choice evangelical groups at home and abroad, particularly in Africa. Newly filed 2013 tax documents and a [grant tracking website](#) at the Department of Health and Human Services have revealed that one controversial evangelical organization I profiled, the Children’s AIDS Fund (CAF), has again been [awarded federal funding](#). In June 2014, CAF Uganda received \$1.5 million as part of a multiyear HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention program. That brings the total CAF Uganda has received since the start of Obama’s second term to at least \$6.6 million. This direct funding isn’t CAF’s only source of federal money. The organization is also a sub-grantee of Catholic Relief Services via the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Response, or PEPFAR, in Zambia. According to Catholic Relief Services’ [most recent tax returns](#), from 2011–12, that subgrant amounted to \$2.1 million.” [\[The Nation, 12/1/18\]](#)

CAF Has A Controversial Anti-LGBTQ, Anti-Reproductive Health History

Smith’s Organization Is Anti-LGBTQ and Increasingly Aligns Itself With Anti-Abortion Hate Groups Including The Family Research Council. “[CAF founders Shepherd and Anita Smith] have been vehement foes of what they see as the corrupting influence of LGBT organizations in the field of AIDS relief. In a 2001 speech to the conservative Christian group Concerned Women for America (CWA), Anita said, “What we have here is a power struggle between homosexual white men who abuse all the government AIDS programs fundamentally to fund their subculture and their political activities.” And the Smiths continue to align themselves with right-wing ‘pro-family’ organizations. In [2011](#), for example, the Smiths were featured speakers at the Moscow Demographic Summit, sponsored by the anti-gay World Congress of Families, where the couple spoke alongside representatives of CWA; the Population Research Institute, which promotes the threat of a ‘demographic winter’ if white Christians don’t reproduce in greater numbers; and the Family Research Council. In Uganda, the couple became close allies of Pastor Martin Ssempe, best known for his public condom burnings and anti-gay diatribes, who strongly pushed the anti-homosexuality bill. In 2004, Ssempe became a PEPFAR subgrantee. The Smiths’ support helped his work get noticed in Washington, and in 2005 he testified on Capitol Hill.” [\[The Nation, 12/1/18\]](#)

The Nation: CAF “See[s] PrEP As Just Another Excuse For People To Act Immorally.” “In September CAF released a [policy brief](#) expressing deep reservations about the use of PrEP. Without offering any evidence, the brief claims, ‘Today fewer youth are hearing the message of risk avoidance and increasingly think, ‘if I get infected I’ll just take a pill.’...Instead of looking at the positive impact PrEP could have in reducing HIV transmission, CAF bemoans the loss of ‘traditional’ messages of delaying ‘sexual debut.’ The Smiths and their organization appear to see PrEP as just another excuse for people to act immorally.” [\[The Nation, 12/1/14\]](#)

CAF Has Been Determined Unfit For Funding By A Congressional Committee Due To Its “Anti-Gay Positions And Opposition To Condoms.” “Despite having been the subject of multiple investigations—CAF was found unfit for funding by a congressional committee as early as 2004—and repeated questions about its anti-gay positions, opposition to condoms and support for failed abstinence-only-until-marriage approaches, the Smiths continue to be embraced by government officials as experts in the field of HIV and AIDS.” [\[The Nation, 12/1/14\]](#)

Another Potential Replacement For Azar Is Seema Verma, Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Under Verma, CMS Has Installed Barriers To Obtaining Full Reproductive Healthcare

Verma Put Out A November 2018 Proposed Rule That Would Create Additional Hurdles For Health Care Issuers Providing Abortion Care

In The Name Of Improving The “Integrity” Of The ACA, Verma’s CMS Wants To Require Issuers To Provide Separate Bills For Abortion Services. “The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today issued a proposed rule, ‘Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA): Exchange Program Integrity.’ This proposal would safeguard taxpayer dollars by ensuring that people are accurately determined eligible for premium subsidies they receive through the Exchange. In addition, to better align federal regulations with statutory requirements and congressional intent, the rule proposes that issuers must send a separate bill and collect separate payments for the portion of the consumer’s premium attributable to certain abortion services for which public funding is prohibited. ‘This administration is committed to making sure taxpayer dollars are spent appropriately,’ said CMS Administrator Seema Verma. ‘Maintaining a high level of program integrity on the Exchange is essential, including ensuring that premium tax credits only go to those who are eligible for them. This proposed rule represents CMS’ commitment, consistent with the law, to continuously improve and strengthen oversight over the programs we administer on behalf of the American taxpayer.’” [[cms.org, 11/7/18](#)]

The Proposed Change Has Been Praised By Anti-Abortion Extremist Groups. “The Trump administration on Wednesday re-opened an abortion question from the days of Obamacare’s passage, proposing that individual market insurers isolate the add-on premium for plans that cover abortion and bill enrollees separately for the surcharge. The proposed rule would impact individual market insurers in 24 states and the District of Columbia that can cover abortions as long as they include the surcharge... The anti-abortion group Susan B. Anthony List welcomed the proposed rule as a ‘step in the right direction,’ although they still want Congress to ban any federally subsidized plan from covering elective abortions.” [[Modern Healthcare, 11/7/18](#)]

CMS Issued Final Rules On The ACA Marketplace That Provide Tax Exemptions To Anti-Abortion Health Care Consumers

Verma Said That The December 2017 Rule Changes Would Work Around The ACA’s Health Law Penalty To Provide Relief For “Pro-Life Americans.” “Object to abortion? You may be able to get an exemption from the Affordable Care Act tax penalty for people who don’t get health insurance. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced final rules Monday for the ACA’s health insurance marketplaces, and expanded exemptions were part of the package... People who object to abortion can get an exemption if all available health plans in their area cover the procedure... Medicare and Medicaid administrator Seema Verma said the exemption for abortion objectors provides ‘pro-life Americans’ with relief if they are living in an area where the only available ACA plan covers abortion. About half the states already forbid ACA plans from covering abortion, so it’s also uncertain how many consumers would qualify for the new exemption.” [[NY Daily News / Associated Press, 12/15/17](#)]

Verma Praised A Law Trump Signed In April 2017 That Targeted Planned Parenthood, Reversed Obama-Era Safeguards For Birth Control Access

The [Bill](#) Passed Through The Republican-Controlled House And Senate After A Tie-Breaking Vote By Vice President Mike Pence — A Known Anti-Abortion Ideologue. “Vice President Mike Pence cast a tie-breaking vote in the U.S. Senate Thursday to shred family planning safeguards enacted under the Obama administration... HHS finalized the rule in the last weeks of the Obama administration—opening it up to [repeal through the Congressional](#)

[Review Act](#), an arcane procedural tool that GOP lawmakers can [use to undo the last six months of Obama-era regulations](#) within the first 60 days of the new Congress and with a Republican president willing to sign off on their efforts. The rule clarified existing law and sent a clear message that state officials can't stop reproductive health-care providers from receiving federal [Title X](#) funds if they offer abortion care." [[Rewire.News, 3/30/17](#)]

Extremist Anti-Abortion Lobbyists Hailed The Legislation. "‘Prioritizing funding away from Planned Parenthood to comprehensive health care alternatives is a winning issue,’ said Marjorie Dannenfelser, the president of the Susan B. Anthony List, an anti-abortion group, who attended the closed-door bill signing at the White House on Thursday. ‘We expect to see Congress continue its efforts to redirect additional taxpayer funding away from Planned Parenthood through pro-life health care reform after the spring recess.’" [[New York Times, 3/13/17](#)]

After Trump Signed The Bill Into Law, Verma Stood Next To SBA List’s Dannenfelser And Other Members Of The Anti-Abortion Lobby At A Celebratory White House Presser, Remarking That Trump’s Signature Indicated He Would Make Good On Anti-Abortion Campaign Promises. "I think that the president’s signature today is an important step as it shows that the president is keeping his campaign promises... the administration is... continuing to demonstrate and show that we want states to be in charge of the decision-making so that they can determine what works best for them and the citizens that they serve." [[C-SPAN, 4/13/18](#)]

Verma Has A Long History Of Attacking The Government-Sponsored Healthcare Programs She Now Runs
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She’s Been Credited With Giving Republicans The Ideas They Needed To Pare Back The ACA’s Medicaid Expansion. "Obamacare expanded the Medicaid program in 2014 so that millions of adults, many of whom don’t have children, could newly qualify for care under the health coverage program for the poor. And since then, it has been in the crosshairs of conservatives who see it as an out-of-control entitlement. When President Donald Trump picked Seema Verma to be head of the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services—the \$1 trillion agency overseeing health programs that insure more than 130 million Americans—he named the person who has already done as much as anyone to give Republicans around the country the ideas to pare it back." [[Politico, 9/8/17](#)]

Verma Began Her Anti-Medicaid Policy Work In Indiana Working As A Healthcare Consultant To Then Governor Mike Pence’s Administration. "It started in Indiana: During Vice President Mike Pence’s tenure as governor, Verma was a health consultant who developed an approach to inject some free-market spirit into the Obamacare Medicaid expansion that took effect there in 2015. Under her plan, Indiana [added](#) costs for low-income patients who enrolled, as well as job search incentives and coverage lockouts for people who missed monthly payments. That work also helped her score gigs with GOP officials in Kentucky, Ohio and Iowa, among other places, looking to use their state-level powers to clamp down on what they saw as a swelling federal giveaway." [[Politico, 9/8/17](#)]

The Indiana Program, Verma’s “Brainchild,” Stripped Vulnerable Populations Of Medicaid Protections And Provisions. "Verma is best-known for her role in reshaping the Indiana Medicaid program under then-Governor Mike Pence. Despite Pence being an ardent critic of Obamacare, Indiana made the choice to [expand Medicaid](#) anyway. But they utilized a pathway

known as the 1115 waiver to craft a program that diverged significantly from the guidelines under the standard Obamacare program, and quickly created the most conservative Medicaid expansion program in the country. That program, known as the Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0, was the brainchild of Verma and her health-care consulting company, SVC, Inc, then recommended as an experienced expert and consultancy firm with knowledge of the minutiae of CMS regulations... It quickly became clear that the HIP 2.0 program under Verma did not intend to be a very generous program. The plan sought to eliminate standard Medicaid protections and provisions for vulnerable people, exchanging them for a premium-based program that mimicked private plans." [[The Atlantic, 2/17/17](#)]

A Third Potential Azar Replacement Is Eric Hargan, Deputy Secretary of HHS

Deputy HHS Secretary Eric Hargan Has Been Intimately Involved With HHS' Unaccompanied Minors Program, Including The Agency's Interference With The Reproductive Rights Of Young People In Its Care

According To Calendars Obtained By American Oversight, Hargan Ran Several Meetings About HHS' Unaccompanied Children Program In April 2018. "As deputy secretary, Hargan held several meetings in April 2018 about HHS' unaccompanied children program and a memorandum of understanding that HHS had negotiated to share information with the Department of Homeland Security. The program would become a political flashpoint one month later, after then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced in May 2018 the Trump administration's "zero-tolerance" policy of family separations." [[Politico PULSE, 2/19/19](#)]

The ACLU Sued HHS For Blocking Migrant Teen's Abortion In *Garza v. Hargan*. "The ACLU has taken the Trump administration to court over its new policy of preventing young immigrant women from having abortions they want. The ACLU represents a 17-year-old woman who came to the United States without her parents and who is currently residing in a government-funded shelter in Texas. The Trump administration will not allow her to leave the shelter in order to get an abortion." [[ACLU.org, 8/8/18](#)]

Deputy HHS Secretary Eric Hargan Met With Multiple Extreme Anti-Abortion, Anti-LGBTQ Individuals And Groups

Deputy HHS Secretary Eric Hargan Met With C-FAM President Austin Ruse Who Has A History Of Making Bigoted Remarks

February 2018: In His Official Capacity As Deputy HHS Secretary Eric Hargan Met With C-FAM President Austin Ruse. [[American Oversight, Accessed 3/19/19](#)]

Subject: [REDACTED] Meeting with Austin Ruse
Location: 614-G

Start: Mon 2/26/2018 9:00 AM
End: Mon 2/26/2018 10:00 AM

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Accepted

Organizer: DeputySecretary (OS/IOS)
Required Attendees: [REDACTED] (OS/IOS); Caliguirri, Laura (HHS/IOS) (Laura.Caliguirri@hhs.gov); Callahan, Kenneth (HHS/IOS) (Kenneth.Callahan@hhs.gov); austinruse@c-fam.org; Brady, Will (HHS/IOS); Moreno, Rafael (HHS/ASA); Hargan, Eric (OS/IOS)
Optional Attendees: presidentaustinruse@c-fam.org

Your meeting with the Deputy Secretary is now confirmed for **Monday, February 26, 2018 @ 9:00 a.m.** In preparation for this meeting, please find the following information:

Ruse And C-Fam Have Frequently Made Extremist Anti-LGBTQ Remarks And Touted The Trump Administration's Cruel Family Separation Policy

2017: C-FAM Sent Out A Fundraising Email Of A Swastika Superimposed Over A Rainbow Flag, Stating "We Will Always Call Homosexual Behavior Sinful, Offensive, And Deeply Harmful..." "Anti-LGBTQ hate group C-Fam, which has special consultative status at the United Nations, sent a December 8 fundraising email that featured a custom meme of a rainbow flag with a swastika in it. The meme read, 'Sexual Fascists Want to Take Away Your Rights. We are Beating Them at the UN. Help us.' C-Fam's fundraising email that included the meme repeatedly used variants of the term 'homosexual fascists,' comparing LGBTQ people to Nazis. The email did not shy away from other anti-queer rhetoric, including saying, 'We will always call homosexual behavior sinful, offensive, and deeply harmful to the individual who practices it and to society at large.'" [[Media Matters, 12/8/17](#)]

Ruse Derided Former First Lady Laura Bush's Op-Ed Calling For An End To Family Separation. "Laura Bush says she is heartbroken about the current policy of separating children from their illegal alien parents. Here is Mrs. Bush telling Larry King she is fine with separating unborn children from their mothers in abortion." [[Austin Ruse Twitter, 6/18/18](#)]

Ruse Has Written Dozens Of Anti-LGBTQ And Anti-Abortion Articles For Breitbart

Ruse Once Wrote That "There Is No Scientific Evidence That Transgenderism Is A Real Thing." "President Trump did the right thing in overturning the Obama policy of allowing the gender confused in uniform to defend our country. First and foremost, there is no scientific evidence that transgenderism is a real thing, except insofar as someone feels or thinks they are the wrong sex. There are no reputable studies that show any physical reality that leads someone to believe they are the wrong sex. There is no transgender gene, no part of the brain that is different in such a person. Certainly, there are scientific claims, but claims do not equal truth." [[Austin Ruse, Breitbart, 8/4/17](#)]

Ruse: "Kids Raised by Same-Sex Couples Twice As Likely To Be Depressed, Fat Adults." [[Austin Ruse, Breitbart, 7/7/16](#)]

Ruse: "Obama Administration Imposes Transgenderism Nationwide." [[Austin Ruse, Breitbart, 5/13/16](#)]

During His Tenure at HHS, Hargan Met With At Least Two Groups That Oppose Birth Control

Hargan Met With The Most Prominent Anti-Abortion Group That Sued The Obama Administration Over Its ACA Birth Control Requirement

Hargan Met With Members Of The Little Sisters Of The Poor. [[American Oversight, Accessed 3/19/19](#)]

Subject: [REDACTED] to meet with the Little Sisters of the Poor
Location: 610-F
Start: Thu 11/9/2017 10:30 AM
End: Thu 11/9/2017 11:00 AM
Recurrence: (none)
Meeting Status: Accepted
Organizer: Secretary Scheduler (OS/IOS)
Required Attendees: Brady, Will (HHS/IOS); DeputySecretary (OS/IOS); [REDACTED] Lagomarsino, Katie (OS/IOS); Leggett, Lance (HHS/IOS); Martinez, Cecilia (OS/IOS); Moreno, Rafael (HHS/ASA); Olson, Carolyn (OS/IOS); Skrzycki, Kristin (HHS/IOS); Tignor, Beth (HHS/IOS); Trueman, Laura (HHS/IEA); Norton, Jane (OS/IEA); Severino, Roger (HHS/OCR); Stannard, Paula (HHS/IOS); Royce, Shannon (OS/CFBNP); Butterfield, Justin (HHS/OCR); Bell, March (HHS/OCR); Stimson, Brian (HHS/OGC)

The Little Sisters Of The Poor Pursued A Lawsuit Against The Birth Control Mandate.

“When the Little Sisters of the Poor filed a complaint against the Affordable Care Act’s contraceptive mandate in 2013, they joined a host of other religious charities and colleges that claimed the law placed a burden on their free exercise of their religion... The Sisters and other religious non-profit groups have claimed protection under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, or RFRA, which prohibits the federal government from placing a “substantial burden” on a person or group’s exercise of religion.” [[The Atlantic, 7/14/15](#)]

Hargan Also Met With A Group That Promotes The Claim That Some Birth Control Methods Cause Abortion

Hargan Met With Members Of Co-Founders Of The Contend Project. [[American Oversight, Accessed 3/19/19](#)]

Subject: [REDACTED] Meeting with Brooke Stanton
Location: Deputy Secretary’s Conference Room, 614-G
Start: Thu 4/12/2018 11:00 AM
End: Thu 4/12/2018 11:30 AM
Recurrence: (none)
Meeting Status: Accepted
Organizer: DeputySecretary (OS/IOS)
Required Attendees: [REDACTED] (OS/IOS); Hargan, Eric (OS/IOS); Brady, Will (HHS/IOS); Brooke Stanton
Optional Attendees: Caliguiri, Laura (HHS/IOS) (Laura.Caliguiri@hhs.gov); Callahan, Kenneth (HHS/IOS) (Kenneth.Callahan@hhs.gov); Moreno, Rafael (OS/ASA/IOS)

Attendees: Deputy Secretary Hargan, Will Brady, Brooke Stanton, Christiane West

The Contend Project Opposes Some Common Birth Control Methods, Claiming It Causes “A New Human Being” To “Die.” “Birth control is any drug, device or practice that controls or prevents the birth of human beings, who may or may not already exist. Birth control that works before fertilization (when a new human being begins to exist and pregnancy begins) is contraception. Birth control that works after fertilization is an abortifacient (a method that induces abortion – destroys the new human being and ends a pregnancy).”

[[ContendProjects.org](https://www.contendprojects.org), Accessed 3/19/19]

Hargan Attended March For Life, Which Supports And Gives A Platform To Extremist Views

Eric Hargan Attended The March For Life In 2019. “‘HHS looks forward to issuing the final rule promptly,’ spokeswoman Caitlin Oakley wrote me, referring to the proposed Title X changes, although she didn’t confirm whether they’ll be released today. Oakley said HHS Secretary Alex Azar will be speaking this morning at a pre-march conference hosted by the Family Research Council and confirmed that Deputy Secretary Eric Hargan will be attending the march.” [[Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com), 1/18/19]

March For Life Organizers Cited Research From A Fringe Anti-LGBT Hate-Group To Justify Its Anti-Abortion Views

March For Life Organizers Cited Research By A Southern Poverty Law Center Recognized Hate Group To Claim That Scientific Evidence Supports An Anti-Abortion Worldview. “Anti-choice activists convened in Washington, D.C., today at the annual March for Life protest that condemns access to abortion services...The Washington Post reports that the organizers used two ‘scientific papers’ to bolster their claim that zygotes are living beings; one was written by an anti-abortion group, and the other came from the American College of Pediatricians, a socially conservative advocacy group that the Southern Poverty Law Center describes as ‘a fringe anti-LGBT hate group that masquerades as the premier U.S. association of pediatricians.’” [[The Cut](https://www.thecut.com), 1/18/19]

March For Life 2019 Gave A Platform To Anti-Abortion, Anti-Muslim Extremists

March For Life 2019 Hosted A Conference Headlined By David Daleiden. [[March For Life](https://www.marchforlife.org), Accessed 3/19/19]

- **Daleiden Released A Series Of Deceptively Altered Videos To Smear Planned Parenthood.** “The videos, recorded by two activists posing as representatives of a biotechnology firm procuring tissue for researchers and universities, continue to be released online about once a week. One of the activists, David Daleiden of California, told The New York Times last month that his ‘thousands of hours of videotape’ was enough to release videos into the fall...But, it said, ‘the manipulation of the videos does mean they have no evidentiary value in a legal context and cannot be relied upon for any official inquiries’ unless C.M.P. provides investigators with its original material, and that material is independently authenticated as unaltered.” [[New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com), 8/27/15]
- **Daleiden Was Indicted On Felony Charges For The Planned Parenthood Smear.** “A grand jury in Texas... indicted Daleiden and Merritt on felony charges of using fake drivers licenses to gain access to a Planned Parenthood meeting. They also indicted

Daleiden on misdemeanor charges of trying to buy human tissue — the kind of misconduct he was trying to pin on Planned Parenthood. Those charges were dismissed: the misdemeanor on technical grounds, and the felonies after lawyers argued the grand jury didn't have the authority to bring charges so different from their original mandate. [[NPR, 3/29/17](#)]

March For Life 2019 Was Headlined By Ben Shapiro. [[March For Life, Accessed 3/19/19](#)]

- **Shapiro Claimed That All Muslims Are Radical Extremists.** “Conservative pundit Ben Shapiro jumped in to say the nature of Islam is irrelevant. More important, according to Shapiro, is what its followers believe, ‘because that’s what they act upon.’ Through this lens, Shapiro painted a disturbing picture of the religious wellspring for people who fly planes into towers and behead their prisoners.” [[PunditFact, 11/5/14](#)]
- **Shapiro: “Arabs Like To Bomb Crap And Live In Open Sewage.”** [[Twitter, 9/27/10](#)]