



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE

ACTION ALERT

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR A HUMAN LIFE AMENDMENT, INC.
1500 Massachusetts Avenue, NW • Suite 24 • Washington, DC 20005

202.393.0703
FAX: 202.347.1383
NCHLA.ORG

Support Health Care Reform That Respects Life

Congress is working on three main health care reform bills—one in the House, two in the Senate.

House: On July 17, the Committees on Education and Labor and on Ways and Means favorably reported the America's Affordable Health Choices Act (H.R. 3200), while the Committee on Energy and Commerce continues its markup. During markup these committees rejected amendments to exclude mandated coverage for abortion.

Senate: On July 15, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee voted out its bill, the Affordable Health Choices Act (not yet numbered). During markup the committee rejected amendments to exclude federal funding or mandated coverage for abortion and to maintain current state laws limiting and regulating abortion. The Senate Finance Committee continues to work on a bill that it hopes will be able to secure bipartisan support.

On July 17, Bishop William Murphy, Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, sent a letter to Congress saying: "The USCCB looks forward to working with you to reform health care successfully in a manner that offers accessible, affordable and quality health care that protects and respects the life and dignity of all people from conception until natural death." Abortion must not be included as part of a national health care benefit. "No health care reform plan should compel us or others to pay for the destruction of human life, whether through government funding or mandatory coverage of abortion." Bishop Murphy argued that any legislation should reflect longstanding policies "on abortion funding, mandates and conscience protections because they represent sound morality, wise policy and political reality." For the full text of Bishop Murphy's letter, see:

nchla.org/datasource/idocuments/071709USCCBhealthcareltr.pdf . For a backgrounder on the legal "status quo" on abortion and conscience rights, see:

nchla.org/datasource/idocuments/fedabortionlawbackgrndr.pdf .

Underlining Bishop Murphy's concern, 19 House Democrats sent a letter on June 25 to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), stating that "we cannot support any health care reform proposal unless it explicitly excludes abortion from the scope of any government-defined or subsidized health insurance plan." See: nchla.org/datasource/idocuments/dem062509healthletter.pdf.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Finance Committee continue to mark up bills. Floor votes could occur before the August recess. Please contact your Representative and Senators!

Action: Contact Members through e-mail, phone calls or FAX letters. E-mails can be sent through NCHLA's Grassroots Action Center—please see: nchla.org/action.asp . Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at: 202-224-3121, or call the local offices of your Representative and Senators. Full contact info can be found on Members' web sites at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov.

Message: "A fair and just health care reform bill must exclude mandated coverage for abortion, and uphold longstanding laws that restrict abortion funding and protect conscience rights."

When: Committees are now marking up bills. Votes could occur on House and Senate floor before the August recess. Thanks!

7/20/09