



A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care

January 24, 2011

Joseph R. Pitts
Chairman, House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,000 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, I am writing to applaud your efforts to ensure the protection of the unborn and of providers' conscience rights.

We want to offer our support for your legislation, H.R. 358, the Protect Life Act. While we continue to believe the current provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) prevent federal funding of abortion, your legislation will provide further protection by codifying the "Hyde amendment" relative to the new health care reform law. We also appreciate the bill's additions to the conscience protections which hospitals and health care providers already have under the Weldon Amendment. In addition to the steps forward taken by H.R. 358 in the context of the ACA, we must continue to work for the Hyde and Weldon amendments in the annual appropriations cycle until we can make those protections for unborn life and conscience rights truly permanent.

We look forward to working with you to ensure access to life-affirming health care coverage for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Carol Keehan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Carol Keehan, DC
President and CEO