



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE

# ACTION ALERT

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## Stop Abortion Funding in Health Care Reform!

**What has happened so far?** The U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate have passed different health care reform bills. On the question of preventing abortion funding, the House language is good, the Senate language is unacceptable. Outside the abortion context, neither bill has adequate conscience protection for health care providers, plans or employers.

**House:** On November 7, 2009, during floor debate on the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962), the House approved, 240 to 193, the Stupak-Pitts Amendment, to enact a permanent ban on federal funding of elective abortions or health plans that include such abortions. The House then narrowly passed H.R. 3962.

**Senate:** On December 8, 2009, during floor debate on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (H.R. 3590), the Senate voted, 54-yes, 45-no, to table (set aside) the Nelson-Hatch-Casey Amendment, a measure similar to the Stupak-Pitts Amendment. On Christmas Eve, the Senate passed H.R. 3590. The bill requires federal funds to help subsidize and promote health plans that cover elective abortions. All purchasers of such plans will be required to pay for other people's abortions through a separate payment solely to pay for abortion.

**What's next?** The two chambers need to agree on a final bill. *It is anticipated that on Sunday, March 21, the House may vote on health care legislation.*

The U.S. Catholic bishops continue to make the moral case that genuine health care reform must maintain the longstanding policy against federal funding of abortion, include full conscience protection and assure that health care is accessible and affordable for all. *Members should be urged to oppose bills that do not meet these criteria.* Please contact your Representative and Senators today!

**ACTION:** Contact your Representatives and Senators today by e-mail, phone or FAX.

- Send an e-mail through NCHLA's Grassroots Action Center at: [www.nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=279](http://www.nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=279).
- Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at: 202-224-3121, or call your Members' local offices. Contact info can be found on Members' web sites at: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

**MESSAGE—HOUSE:** "I am pleased that the House health care bill maintains the longstanding policy against federal funding of abortion. On the other hand, the provisions on abortion funding in the current unamended Senate health care bill are seriously deficient and unacceptable. I urge you to work to uphold essential provisions against abortion funding, to include full conscience protection and to assure that health care is accessible and affordable for all. I urge you to oppose any bill unless and until these criteria are met."

**MESSAGE—SENATE:** "I am deeply disappointed that the current unamended Senate health care bill fails to maintain the longstanding policy against federal funding of abortion and does not include adequate protection for conscience. I urge you to support essential provisions against abortion funding, similar to those in the House bill. Include full conscience protection and assure that health care is accessible and affordable for all. I urge you to oppose any bill unless and until these criteria are met."

**WHEN:** On Sunday, March 21, the House may vote on health care legislation. Please act today!  
Thanks!

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