



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE

ACTION ALERT

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Restore Ban on Public Funding of Abortion in D.C.!

Every year since 1989 (except for Fiscal Years 1994 to 1996), Congress has approved the Dornan Amendment to prevent the use of *all* congressionally appropriated funds for elective abortion in the District of Columbia. Under the U.S. Constitution, Art. 1, Sec. 8, Congress has responsibility to appropriate all funds for the District.

On June 25, the House Appropriations subcommittee with responsibility for D.C. funding reported out a bill that reverses the Dornan Amendment. The restriction on abortion funding would no longer apply to *all* funds appropriated under the act, but only to the “federal” funds, leaving the “local” funds available to pay for elective abortion.

In a June 30 letter to the House Appropriations Committee, Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, argued that this narrowing of the ban to cover only “federal” funds is a bookkeeping exercise: “The impact in terms of human lives will be exactly the same as if the amendment were reversed in its entirety.” He noted that while some may try to defend this action as an aspect of “home rule” for the District, in fact some bans on the use of local District funds for other purposes remain intact in the bill. In reality, this action is about public funding for abortion, and presumably is “the first step in a broader effort to restore such funding throughout the federal government.” Cardinal Rigali concluded: “I urge you to reverse the subcommittee’s action, and restore the policy against publicly funded abortions in the District of Columbia that has been in effect for over a decade.” For full text of letter, see: www.nchla.org/datasource/ldocuments/dcfundingltr.pdf.

The bill that appropriates funds for the District of Columbia, the Fiscal Year 2010 Financial Services Appropriations Bill (not yet numbered), is scheduled to go before the *full House Appropriations Committee on July 7, at 7 pm*. Reps. Todd Tiahrt (R-KS) and Lincoln Davis (D-TN) will offer an amendment to restore the D.C. abortion funding ban. Please check here to see if your Representative serves on this committee: www.nchla.org/datasource/ldocuments/Hous.app.comm.pdf.

ACTION: If your Representative serves on the House Appropriations Committee, please contact him or her by e-mail, FAX letter, or phone. Constituents of committee members can send e-mail messages through the NCHLA Grassroots Action Center—click here. Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at: 202-224-3121, or call your Representative’s local office. Full contact info can be found on Members’ web sites at www.house.gov.

Also, most Members will be back in their home districts during their Independence Day recess the week of June 29. If possible, meet with your Representative at his or her local office. Be alert to public events where less formal communications can take place.

MESSAGE: “When the Appropriations Committee considers the Financial Services bill, please support the Tiahrt/Davis amendment to restore the ban on all public funding of elective abortions in the District of Columbia. Funding abortion will not reduce but greatly increase the number of abortions.”

WHEN: Full committee markup is scheduled for Tuesday, July 7, at 7 pm. Please act today! Thanks!

6/30/09