

ACTION ALERT

House and Senate to Vote After Labor Day on Health Bills That Will Greatly Expand and Fund Abortion

The U.S. House and U.S. Senate are expected to vote after Labor Day on "health care reform" bills that, in their current forms, could produce the greatest expansion of abortion since *Roe v. Wade*.

The bills are being pushed hard by President Obama and by top Democratic congressional leaders, including pro-abortion House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Ca.). However, growing public concerns about the bills caused sufficient resistance among some factions of Democrats that the leadership was forced to abandon the original plan of having floor votes on the bills in July. The August recess provides an excellent opportunity for concerned citizens to express themselves to their senators and House members while the lawmakers are back home taking the pulse of public opinion.

No congressional Republican has yet endorsed the bills being pushed by the White House in either the House or the Senate. The Democrats, who hold about 60 percent of the seats in both houses of Congress, are divided, with some Democrats opposed, either because of the pro-abortion provisions or for other reasons, and many others undecided or uncertain.

In the U.S. Senate, the White House is backing a bill (as yet unnumbered) sponsored by Senator Ted Kennedy (D-Ma.), which was approved on July 15 by the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee on a 13-10 party line vote. The committee voted down all pro-life amendments, including an amendment offered by pro-life Senator Tom Coburn (R-Ok.) to prevent health care providers from being penalized for refusing to participate in providing abortions.

"The Kennedy bill would result in the greatest expansion of abortion since *Roe v. Wade*," said NRLC Legislative Director Douglas Johnson. "It would result in federally mandated coverage of abortion by nearly all health plans, federally mandated recruitment of abortionists by local health networks, and nullification of many state abortion laws. It would also result in federal funding of abortion on a massive scale."

In the U.S. House, the White House is behind H.R. 3200, which has been approved by three different committees. All three committees voted down amendments to prevent the bills from mandating coverage of abortions and to prevent federal subsidies for abortions, as only a few Democrats joined the minority Republican members in support of the amendments.

On the third panel, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, the pro-abortion side narrowly won adoption of a "phony compromise" amendment offered by Rep. Lois Capps (D-Ca.) (who has a zero percent career prolife voting record) that would result in elective abortions being covered under the government-operated "public plan" the bill would create, and would allow federal subsidies to flow to private insurance plans that cover elective abortions. The pro-abortion members of the committee voted

down an amendment offered by Reps. Bart Stupak (D-Mi.) and Joe Pitts (R-Pa.) to prohibit federal subsidies from going to plans that cover elective abortions.

"The adoption of the pro-abortion Capps Amendment, and the rejection of the pro-life Stupak-Pitts amendment, underscores that H.R. 3200 would drastically change federal policy, channeling massive new federal subsidies to health plans that pay for abortion on demand, including a national plan that will be offered by the federal government," said NRLC Legislative Director Douglas Johnson. "This is Condition Red for the pro-life movement. Every pro-life American should communicate, loudly and clearly, his or her opposition to this Obama-backed bill, before it comes to the House floor in September."

Meanwhile, behind closed doors, members of the Senate Finance Committee are trying to write a third health care bill that could be very different from the Kennedy bill and from H.R. 3200. It is not yet known when the product of these negotiations will be released for public inspection, or what abortion-related provisions it will contain.

Obtaining broad federal mandates and subsidies for abortion as part of "health care reform" is currently the top priority of many pro-abortion organizations, such as the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). These organizations are pushing for the abortion mandates both in public statements and in less visible lobbying efforts. In April, the president of PPFA said that her organization intends to use the health care legislation as a "platform" to guarantee access to abortion to "all women." Likewise, the National Abortion Federation, an association of abortion providers, said, "NAF supports health care reform as a way to increase access to comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion care, for all women."

ACTION ITEMS

Please take a few minutes to TELEPHONE the offices of your two U.S. senators, give your name and address, and tell the senators' staff persons that you wish to be recorded with the message "abortion and abortion funding must be explicitly excluded from any health care/insurance reform legislation." The offices of any U.S. senator can be reached through 202-224-3121. Also, please TELEPHONE the office of your U.S. House member, give your name and address, and inform the staff person that you wish to be recorded with the message "abortion and abortion funding must be explicitly excluded from any health care/insurance reform legislation." You can reach any U.S. House member's office through 202-225-3121. Town Hall type of meetings may be scheduled in your area. Watch your newspapers for dates and times. Attend these meetings and let your voice be heard with the message noted above.

Also, please send short letters to the "letters to the editor" features of your local newspapers, in order to alert your fellow pro-life citizens to the sweeping pro-abortion mandates and pro-abortion subsidies that the Obama White House and the pro-abortion lobby are trying to smuggle into law through "health care reform."

Please share this information with two or three friends or family members and ask them to follow through with the Action Items. Members of Congress must hear from us in August.

Keep up-to-date by visiting Right to Life of Michigan at www.rtl.org