



Pro-Life Activities

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

November 18, 2015

MEMORANDUM

To: Diocesan Pro-Life and Respect Life Directors
State Catholic Conference Directors

From: Richard Doerflinger, Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities
Jayd Henricks, Office of Government Relations

Re: Urgent Need for Action on the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act (ANDA)

Dear friends and colleagues:

You have received many requests for action from the Pro-Life Secretariat in the past. This one is especially urgent.

For years we have asked Congress to reform current federal laws on conscience rights, especially to protect individual and institutional health care providers who object to abortion. Current laws like the Weldon amendment are legally vulnerable and seldom enforced; they have been found to have loopholes limiting their effectiveness, and they lack a “right of action” allowing victims of discrimination to defend their rights in court.

For many years our flagship proposal for solving these problems has been the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act (ANDA). Recently it has been combined with provisions on the HHS contraceptive mandate, to create the “Health Care Conscience Rights Act” (HCCRA) (HR 940, S. 1919). HCCRA is now part of the House of Representatives’ Labor/HHS appropriations bill for the coming year.

HCCRA has strong support in the House, but its provisions on contraception have been strongly opposed in the Senate and by the White House. The Supreme Court has also partly addressed the HHS mandate in its Hobby Lobby case, and takes up seven new cases about it in its new term.

Therefore, as we approach the December 11 deadline for Congress to agree on a “must pass” year-end spending bill, we have decided to focus at present on ANDA. Americans’ right to object to involvement in abortion has long enjoyed broad support, and President Obama has said several times that he supports federal laws protecting this right.

We have made good progress in a short time. Recently two dozen pro-life groups, religious and secular, wrote jointly to congressional leadership to say that they support a number of other pro-life bills but they all agree that ANDA is a top priority, the one proposal with a decent chance of being enacted this year as part of that spending legislation. Catholic lay groups such as the Knights of

Columbus and National Council of Catholic Women have offered their help. **In the next two to three weeks**, we need as many Catholics as possible around the country to send e-mail messages to their elected representatives urging them to make ANDA part of that final legislation.

To assist you in spreading the word on this to all constituents, here are three user-friendly items. They are also being shared with all the bishops:

1. New “Stand with Cathy for Conscience Rights” video on YouTube

<https://youtu.be/uknrxrMI61WI>

Featuring nurse Cathy DeCarlo, who was forced by her employer to assist at a late-term abortion – then found she had no right to go to court to keep this from happening to others. Points people to our www.usccb.org/conscience page for more information and an alert. Can be shared on Facebook etc. and embedded into web pages (see instructions below).

2. NCHLA alert making it easy to send e-mails to Congress

<http://www.nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=292>

The National Committee for a Human Life Amendment (NCHLA), our partner organization mobilizing grassroots support for the bishops’ pro-life agenda, has an alert to help constituents write to their elected representatives. There is a pre-written text but each person can add personal messages before and after it – for example, pro-life health professionals can say how they have experienced or witnessed threats to conscience rights on abortion. Live links to this can be shared on web sites and social media; the PDF version can be inserted into Church bulletins and diocesan publications.

3. Brief article explaining the need for ANDA

Attached to this message in Word, and also posted on USCCB’s web site here:

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/conscience-protection/time-to-speak-up-for-conscience-rights.cfm>

Shortcut: <http://goo.gl/bebTwk>

A brief article explaining the need for this law -- for web sites, newsletters, church bulletins, diocesan papers, etc. Provides links to the video and the alert. (To put this in someone else’s name or make changes please notify the author at rdoerflinger@usccb.org.)

Thanks you for all your efforts on behalf of human life and rights of conscience!

How to Share the “Stand with Cathy for Conscience Rights” Video With Your Networks

A minute and a half long, “**Stand with Cathy for Conscience Rights**” can readily be shared from YouTube and Facebook, or downloaded from Dropbox to embed into your own website etc.

Please do not try to extract or share the video from the USCCB web site, but use the links provided below.

For Facebook:

Share our People of Life Facebook Page’s Post

https://www.facebook.com/peopleoflife/videos/1182172361799742/?video_source=pages_finch_trailer

FB Description:

Stand with Cathy for Conscience Rights! ACTION ALERT

Protect the rights of health care workers!

Watch Cathy's story & send your email to Congress today!

<http://www.nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=292>

For e-Newsletters and Other Social Media:

Link to YouTube

<https://youtu.be/uknxrMI61WI?list=PLpTzvCOJa7DA9dhIrAPuqD9vR4DfCJZ60>

YouTube Description:

Cathy Cenzone-DeCarlo, RN, was forced by her employer to participate in a late-term abortion against her deeply-held pro-life beliefs – a major violation of her conscience rights!

Urge Congress to support the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act today! Go to:

www.usccb.org/conscience.

Downloadable QuickTime files (for embedding into web sites etc.)

Medium-Resolution file (102 MB) (sufficient for social media)

https://www.dropbox.com/s/v4dbslyi3p13213/Stand-with-Cathy_MedRez_USCCB_Oct2015.mov?dl=0

High-Resolution file (1.74 GB) (needed only if you need to show on a large screen)

https://www.dropbox.com/s/0x6ackoa8dnnv0s/Stand-with-Cathy_HiRez_USCCB_Oct2015.mov?dl=0

Please contact Deirdre McQuade { dmcquade@usccb.org, 202-541-3087 } if you have difficulty accessing the Dropbox files OR need them in another non-QuickTime video format. To best use the downloadable files on your website or other outlets, please talk with your webmaster or IT help.