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Oklahomans For Life - LEGISLATIVE ALERT

July 20th, 2009

FROM NATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE:

Senate and House to vote in late July on biggest expansion of abortion since *Roe v. Wade*!



Congressional Democratic leaders are aiming to bring massive "health care reform" bills to the floor of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives during the last week in July -- bills that National Right to Life says "would result in the greatest expansion of abortion since *Roe v. Wade*."

On July 15, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee approved a massive bill sponsored by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) on a 13-10 party line vote. (All of the committee Democrats voted for the bill, while all of the Republicans voted against it.) A similar bill, H.R. 3200, backed by the House Democratic leadership, was approved by two House committees, with a third committee set to vote on it on or about July 21. The White House supports the Kennedy bill and H.R. 3200.

"The Kennedy bill and the House Democratic leadership bill would result in the greatest expansion of abortion since *Roe v. Wade*," said National Right to Life (NRLC) Legislative Director Douglas Johnson. "These bills, which President Obama is pushing hard, 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. They would also result in federal funding of abortion on a massive scale." The pro-life movement needs to contact members of Congress immediately about these bills, because they pose a mortal threat to the unborn child, and they are on a fast track for passage.

Before approving the Kennedy bill, the Senate HELP Committee rejected a series of NRLC-backed amendments offered by pro-life Republican members of the committee. Specifically, the committee's Democrats (with the exception of Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa.) voted down an amendment by Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wy.) to prevent health plans from being required to pay for and provide access to abortions, an amendment by Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) to prevent federal funding of abortions, and an amendment by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Ok.) to prevent nullification of many state laws regulating abortion. The pro-abortion majority even rejected a second Coburn amendment to protect the right of health-care providers to refuse to participate directly in providing abortions.

Similar pro-life amendments were voted down in the House Ways and Means Committee and the House Education and Labor Committee, as only a few Democrats joined the committees' minority Republican members in support of

the unsuccessful amendments.

On July 20 or 21, the House Energy & Commerce Committee is expected to consider similar NRLC-backed pro-life amendments, proposed by Congressman Joe Pitts (R-Pa.) and Congressman Bart Stupak (D-Mi.). The members of this committee are listed [here](#). Pro-life Oklahoma 1st District Congressman John Sullivan of Tulsa is on the committee.

The imposition of sweeping pro-abortion mandates 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."

A third version of health-care restructuring legislation is still being written, behind closed doors, by members of the Senate Finance Committee. On July 1, both PPFA and NARAL sent out national legislative alerts expressing alarm that some Republican Finance Committee members were pressing for bill language to exclude abortion from the scope of the mandates and subsidies in the Finance Committee proposal. Also on July 1, the Reverend Carlton W. Veazey, president of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC), sent out an alert to that organization's e-mail list headed, "Urgent! Access to Abortion Services Threatened." The alert said, "Let there be no mistake, basic healthcare includes abortion services. . . . Reproductive healthcare, including abortion services, is an essential component of women's health, and we must act now to make sure women get a fair shake in the final healthcare reform bill." (RCRC is made up of [a number of religious bodies](#), including the Episcopal Church, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church USA, and United Church of Christ.)

On July 17, 2007, during Barack Obama's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, he appeared before the annual conference of the Planned Parenthood Action Fund. Speaking of his plans for "health care reform," Obama said, "in my mind, reproductive care is essential care, basic care, **so it is at the center, the heart of the plan that I propose.**" [emphasis added] Under his plan, Obama explained, people could choose to keep their existing private health care plans, but "insurers are going to have to abide by the same rules in terms of providing comprehensive care, including reproductive care ... that's going to be absolutely vital."

For additional documentation and background information about how "health care reform" bills could have a drastic impact on abortion policies, click [here](#).

What You Can Do Now

Please take a few minutes to type in your zip code on this form, [here](#), to send messages to your two U.S. senators (Jim Inhofe and Tom Coburn) and to your representative in the U.S. House of Representatives, to urge them to oppose

any federal "health care reform" legislation that does not contain explicit exclusions of abortion. You can modify the suggested message as you see fit. When you fill in your mailing address, your messages will automatically be directed to the appropriate U.S. House member and to your two U.S. senators.

In addition, please 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 as "opposed to Senator Kennedy's health care bill because it would result in mandates for virtually all health plans to cover elective abortion, and would result in federal funding of abortion on demand." 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 as "opposed to the House Democratic Leadership health care reform bill, H.R. 3200, because it would result in federal mandates that health plans cover elective abortions, and would result in federal funding of abortion on demand." You can reach any U.S. House member's office through 202-225-3121. You can also find the direct-dial numbers (and fax numbers) for the Washington and in-state offices of your U.S. senators and U.S. House member by calling up their individual profiles on this website, [here](#).

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." You can find contact information for your local news media in our "Media Guide" [here](#).

Thank you for your help with this urgent Legislative Alert from National Right to Life.

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