



512 10th Street, NW Washington, DC 20004-1401  
(202) 626-8800 FAX: (202) 737-9189 Website: www.nrlc.org

July 11, 2016

(202) 626-8820

Dear Member of Congress:

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the federation of state right-to-life organizations, strongly urges your support for the *Conscience Protection Act* when that legislation comes before the House of Representatives this week. NRLC will publish the roll call on passage of the bill in the National Right to Life scorecard of key pro-life roll calls of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. We also reserve the right to score a roll call on any damaging motion to recommit.

The Conscience Protection Act is urgently needed because of a growing number of actions by some state governments to compel participation in abortions by health care providers and others, and because the Obama Administration has effectively adopted a non-enforcement policy with respect to existing federal conscience-protection laws.

In 2014, the California Department of Managed Care issued a decree mandating that nearly all health plans in the state must cover all abortions. This directive was in blatant violation of the Weldon Amendment, a provision of the HHS appropriations bill that has been in continuous effect since 2004. Yet, after two years of inaction, on June 21 the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Health and Human Services issued letters finding that the California policy presents no violation of the Weldon Amendment. The “analysis” presented in the letters is so contorted that it can best be described as fabrication in the service of an ideological agenda.

The Conscience Protection Act that will come before the House as S. 304 (containing the same text as H.R. 4828) would prohibit any level of government from mandating that health care providers participate in abortion. It would protect doctors, nurses, hospitals, and health plans (and employers who purchase the plans). Most importantly, the bill empowers those who are affected by abortion mandates to file private lawsuits in federal courts – without the need for intervention by the pro-abortion activists who draw paychecks at the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

Unfortunately, the 2014 California directive is part of a broader trend. An agency of the state of New York has already adopted an abortion mandate, similar to the California policy, requiring small group employers to cover all kinds of abortion. In Washington state, a state court last month ruled that public hospitals must provide abortions if they offer maternity care.

Nobody should be forced to participate in the brutal act of killing an unborn child. Please support the Conscience Protection Act.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Carol Tobias in blue ink.

Carol Tobias  
President

Handwritten signature of David N. O'Steen in blue ink.

David N. O'Steen, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

Handwritten signature of Douglas D. Johnson in blue ink.

Douglas D. Johnson  
Legislative Director

*Defending Life in America Since 1968*