

Compendium of some of President Obama's "assurances" on federal funding of abortion

July 2009, President Obama Talks to Katie Couric

In response to Couric's question "Do you favor a government option that would cover abortions?," Obama answered in part:

"As you know, I'm pro choice. But I think we also have a tradition of, in this town, historically, of not financing abortions as part of government funded health care."

Available at: http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-5178682.html

Video clip of abortion comment at 16:30: <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=5178969n>

August 2009, Obama remarks to Organizing for America National Health Care Forum

There are no plans under health reform to revoke the existing prohibition on using federal taxpayer dollars for abortions. **Nobody is talking about changing that existing provision, the Hyde Amendment.** Let's be clear about that. It's just not true.

Remarks available at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-the-Organizing-for-America-National-Health-Care-Forum

Video clip available here at 47 minutes:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=AdrXh7wunMM#t=2831s

August 2009, Obama remarks in weekly address, August 22, 2009

When it comes to the current ban on using tax dollars for abortions, nothing will change under reform.

Remarks available here:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/WEEKLY-ADDRESS-President-Obama-Debunks-Phony-Claims-about-Health-Reform-Emphasizes-Consumer-Protections

audio available here (abortion comment at 1:10):

http://www.whitehouse.gov/WeeklyAddress/2009/20090822-ARDCLP/20090822_Weekly_Addr

[ess.mp3](#)

September 2009, Obama's address to Congress:

And one more misunderstanding I want to clear up – under our plan, no federal dollars will be used to fund abortions, and federal conscience laws will remain in place.

Transcript available here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/10/us/politics/10obama.text.html?pagewanted=all>

September 2009, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius says that President Obama “has made it pretty clear” that there will not be federal funding for abortion:

MS. ROMANO: Do you think that the federal government should do some federal funding of abortions, personally?

SECRETARY SEBELIUS: Well, the President has made it pretty clear that Congress and the new health insurance plan will not provide federal funds for abortions.

MS. ROMANO: Well, I know that. I was asking you what you thought.

SECRETARY SEBELIUS: I am the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and I will support the President's proposal moving forward.

Transcript available here:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/14/AR2009091402062.html>

November 2009, Obama interview with Jake Tapper on ABC News, Obama claims he's not trying to change Hyde amendment principle:

And we're not looking to change what is the principle that has been in place for a very long time, which is federal dollars are not used to subsidize abortions.

Transcript available here:

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/transcript-abc-news-exclusive-interview-president-barack-obama/story?id=9034309>

video available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTukoKY01nQ>

November 2009, Interview with Major Garrett on Fox News, Obama claims to believe in the “basic idea” of the Hyde amendment:

Major Garrett: “Will you sign legislation on health care that includes the Stupak language?”

Obama: “I think that there is a balance to be achieved that is consistent with the Hyde Amendment, what existed before we reformed health care. **I believe in the basic idea that Federal dollars shouldn't pay for abortions**, but I also think that we shouldn't restrict women's choices, and so I think there is some negotiations going on, not just on the Democratic side, but I think among people who are of goodwill on both sides, to see if we can arrive at something that meets that criteria and I'm confident we can do that.”

Garrett: “Yes or no, does the Stupak language strike that balance?”

Obama: “Not yet.”

Transcript available here:

<http://politics.blogs.foxnews.com/2009/11/18/major-garrett-interviews-president-obama-transcript/>

Video available here, abortion comments begin at 5:40:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=PKgaB_WKk2s#t=340s

March 21, 2010, Statement issued by White House Communications Director Dan Pfeiffer announcing the Obama Executive Order to the health care bill:

While the legislation as written maintains current law, the executive order provides additional safeguards to ensure that the status quo is upheld and enforced, and that the health care legislation's restrictions against the public funding of abortions cannot be circumvented.

The President has said from the start that this health insurance reform should not be the forum to upset longstanding precedent. The health care legislation and this executive order are consistent with this principle.

Available at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/statement-communications-director-dan-pfeiffer>

March 24, 2010 Obama Executive Order 13535-- “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's Consistency with Longstanding Restrictions on the Use of Federal Funds for Abortion”

Section. 1. Policy. Following the recent enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the "Act"), it is necessary to establish an adequate enforcement mechanism to ensure that Federal funds are not used for abortion services (except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered), consistent with a longstanding Federal statutory restriction that is commonly known as the Hyde Amendment.

...

The Act maintains current Hyde Amendment restrictions governing abortion policy and extends those restrictions to the newly created health insurance exchanges.

...

Sec. 3. Community Health Center Program. The Act establishes a new Community Health Center (CHC) Fund within HHS, which provides additional Federal funds for the community health center program. Existing law prohibits these centers from using Federal funds to provide abortion services (except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered), as a result of both the Hyde Amendment and longstanding regulations containing the Hyde language. Under the Act, **the Hyde language shall apply to the authorization and appropriations of funds for Community Health Centers** under section 10503 and all other relevant provisions.

Available at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/executive-order-patient-protection-and-affordable-care-acts-consistency-with-longst>

May 2011, White House Statement of Administration Policy on the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, H.R. 3

While stating its opposition to H.R. 3, the memo relies on the Hyde amendment to say that H.R. 3 is unnecessary:

Longstanding Federal policy prohibits Federal funds from being used for abortions, except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered. This prohibition is maintained in the Affordable Care Act and reinforced through the President's Executive Order 13535.

Available at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/legislative/sap/112/saphr3r_20110502.pdf

October 2011, White House Statement of Administration Policy on the Protect Life Act, H.R. 358

While recommending the veto the Protect Life Act if it were sent to the President, the statement implied that the Hyde amendment would prevent funding of abortion:

Longstanding Federal policy prohibits Federal funds from being used for abortions, except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered. The Affordable Care Act preserved this prohibition and included policies to ensure that Federal funding is segregated from any private dollars used to fund abortions for which Federal funding is prohibited. The President's Executive Order 13535 reinforces that Federal funding cannot be used for abortions (except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered) and ensures proper enforcement of this policy. H.R. 358 goes well beyond the safeguards found in current law and reinforced in the President's Executive Order by restricting women's private insurance choices.

available at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/legislative/sap/112/saphr358r_20111012.pdf