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For immediate release:

Sunday, March 21, 2010

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**STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE COMMITTEE
ON ABORTION "DEAL" ON HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION**

WASHINGTON -- (Sunday, March 21, 2010, 6 PM EDT) -- In response to today's announcement regarding an agreement between Rep. Bart Stupak (D-Mi.) and President Obama on the pending health care bill (H.R. 3590), the following statement was issued by the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the federation of right-to-life organizations in the 50 states:

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) remains strongly opposed to the Senate-passed health bill (H.R. 3590). A lawmaker who votes for this bill is voting to require federal agencies to subsidize and administer health plans that will pay for elective abortion, and voting to undermine longstanding pro-life policies in other ways as well. Pro-life citizens nationwide know that this is a pro-abortion bill. Pro-life citizens know, and they will be reminded again and again, which lawmakers deserve their gratitude for voting against this pro-abortion legislation.

The executive order promised by President Obama was issued for political effect. It changes nothing. It does not correct any of the serious pro-abortion provisions in the bill. The president cannot amend a bill by issuing an order, and the federal courts will enforce what the law says.

To elaborate: The order does not truly correct any of the seven objectionable pro-abortion provisions described in NRLC's March 19 letter to the House of Representatives, which is posted here:

www.nrlc.org/AHC/NRLCToHouseOnHealthBill.pdf.

Regarding Community Health Centers (CHCs), NRLC has documented the problem created by H.R. 3590 here: www.nrlc.org/AHC/NRLCMemoCommHealth.html.

Prof. Robert Destro, a professor of law and former dean of the Columbus School of Law at the Catholic University of America, and an expert on abortion-related litigation, has sent lawmakers a letter explaining why the bill opens the door to direct federal funding of abortion in Community Health Centers:

www.nrlc.org/ahc/DestroLetterToStupakOnCommHealthCenters.pdf.

Prof. Destro clearly explains why it is the statutory language that will govern.

Regarding the new program to provide tax credits to purchase private insurance, the executive order merely tinkers with the formalities of a bookkeeping scheme under which federal subsidies will pay for plans that cover elective abortion -- a break from the longstanding principles of the Hyde Amendment.

The order does nothing at all to mitigate the other abortion-related problems described in the NRLC letter, dealing with bill provisions that create dangerous regulatory mandate authorities, revise Indian health programs, and create pools of directly appropriated funds that are not covered by existing restrictions on funding of abortion. Nor can the order correct the omission from the pending legislation of the necessary conscience-protection language that had been included in House-passed health care legislation last November (the "Weldon language").

For additional information regarding the abortion-related components of the legislation, and NRLC's assessment of the gravity of these issues, please refer to the March 19 letter linked above, and other materials posted on the NRLC website at www.nrlc.org/AHC/Index.html.

For interviews on this issue, please call the NRLC Communications Department at (202) 626-8825.

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