



Action Alert!

Urge Congress Today to Continue to Work on Genuine Health Care Reform!

January 27, 2010



Bishops to Congress: Set aside partisanship for genuine health reform

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Three leading U.S. bishops called on members of Congress Jan. 26 to "set aside partisan divisions and special-interest pressures" to achieve genuine health reform.

"The health care debate, with all its political and ideological conflict, seems to have lost its central moral focus and policy priority, which is to ensure that affordable, quality, life-giving care is available to all," said a letter signed by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston and Bishops William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y., and John C. Wester of Salt Lake City. The three chair the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' committees on Pro-Life Activities, on Domestic Justice and Human Development and on Migration, respectively.

Although the letter did not refer specifically to the Jan. 19 election of Republican Scott Brown of Massachusetts to the U.S. Senate, the bishops said, "Although political contexts have changed, the moral and policy failure that leaves tens of millions of our sisters and brothers without access to health care still remains."

by *Catholic News Service*



Brief Update: On January 25, 2010 USCCB leaders sent a letter to Congress encouraging "Congress to begin working in a bipartisan manner providing political courage, vision and leadership." The bishops emphasized that "We must all continue to work towards a solution that protects everyone's lives and respects their dignity."

Passage of a health care reform bill is uncertain, but the need for reform remains a national priority and moral imperative. Health care is a basic human right. Yet, there are nearly 50 million Americans who do not have access to health care. "Now is not the time to abandon this task, but rather to set aside partisan divisions and special interest pressures to find ways to enact genuine reform." The entire letter can be found at www.usccb.org/healthcare/HC-Letter-to-Congress-012610.pdf

Take Action Now!

- Contact your Senators and Representative today (For contact information, visit www.house.gov and www.senate.gov). The Capitol switchboard number is 202-224-3121.
- Urge Congress to work in a bipartisan manner toward achieving affordable, accessible health care for all that protects life and does not threaten life.
- Tell your Senators and Representative that health care reform must include the following criteria:
 - 1) Ensure access to quality, affordable, life giving health care for all;
 - 2) Retain longstanding requirements that federal funds not be used for elective abortions or plans that include them, and effectively protects conscience rights;
 - 3) Protect the access to health care that immigrants currently have and removes current barriers to access; and,
 - 4) Restrain costs and apply them equitably across the spectrum of payers.

For more information, contact:

Kathy Saile, Director, Domestic Social Development, 202-541-3134, ksaile@usccb.org or visit: www.usccb.org/healthcare

Prayer for the Uninsured

Father of goodness and love, hear our prayers for the uninsured members of our community and for all who are in need.
For those who seek care but find that it is out of reach, may they find consolation in your healing presence.
For all who are blessed with health and security, may they strive to fulfill the needs of those who are sick and insecure.
For leaders who make decisions that affect the health and well-being of others, may they work to ensure the fundamental right to health care.

We ask this through Christ our Lord who healed those who believed. Amen.