



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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Urgent Memorandum

Date: September 9, 2011

From: Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development, Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, Office of Migration and Refugee Policy, Office of the Secretary of Communications

To: Pastors, Diocesan Pro-Life Directors, Diocesan Social Development Directors, Diocesan Communications Directors, State Catholic Conference Directors

Re: URGENT: Nationwide USCCB Bulletin Insert on HHS Mandate:
“An unprecedented attack on religious liberty.”

For many years, the U.S. bishops have supported access to life-affirming health care for all. During the health care reform debate in Congress, you received a number of urgent USCCB memoranda calling for health care legislation that would advance the goal of universal health care, uphold longstanding federal policies against abortion funding and mandates, and protect rights of conscience.

In implementing the new health care law, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has now issued a rule mandating contraceptive and sterilization coverage in almost all private health plans nationwide. The USCCB General Counsel, criticizing this “nationwide government coercion of religious people and groups to sell, broker or purchase ‘services’ to which they have a moral or religious objection,” has called it “an unprecedented attack on religious liberty.”

HHS has established a period for public comments that ends on **September 30**.

To mobilize Catholics to comment on the proposed HHS mandate, the bishops’ conference is offering the attached urgent bulletin insert. As with our past health care reform efforts, please share this bulletin insert with your parishes and Catholic organizations and agencies as quickly as possible.

More information can be found at www.usccb.org/conscience.

Thank you for your urgent actions and prayers on behalf of this nationwide effort!