

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

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For Immediate Release

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Introduction of State Legislative Resolutions On Religious Liberty Commended

The Catholic Conference of Ohio commends the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate for pursuing Concurrent Resolutions decrying the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services final rule on reproductive services. The Ohio House filed their [Resolution](#) on February 1, 2012, while a similar Resolution in the Senate will be filed next week.

In a recent statement, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced that most health insurance plans, including those offered by non-profit religious employers, will be required to cover the full range of the Institute of Medicine's preventive reproductive services. With few exceptions, health insurers will be forced to offer all FDA-approved forms of contraception, some of which can cause abortion. Catholic hospitals, universities, and charitable organizations will be compelled to provide coverage for drugs and procedures that clearly violate Catholic teaching.

The two Ohio Resolutions urge the President of the United States or Congress to rescind the new rule. Chief sponsors of the House Resolution are Representative Peter Stautberg (R) Cincinnati and Representative Barbara Sears (R) Sylvania. The chief sponsors of the Senate Resolution are Senator David Burke (R) Marysville and Senator Lehner (R) Kettering.

While a reversal of the HHS rule must ultimately be resolved at the federal level, the Catholic Conference of Ohio is pleased that the issue is being raised within our state government. House Speaker Batchelder and Senate President Niehaus have taken the

initiative to pursue these Resolutions. The Conference is encouraging all elected officials to communicate concern over this government mandate that violates the religious liberties of faith-based institutions.

The Catholic Bishops in Ohio and across the nation have [voiced their opposition](#) to the HHS rule. In letters read from the pulpits of parish churches, the Bishops have asked church members to commit themselves to prayer and fasting, and to contact Congress and the President to reverse the Administration's decision.

Cardinal-delegate Timothy Dolan, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops commented, "Never before has the federal government forced individuals and organizations to go out into the marketplace and buy a product that violates their conscience. This shouldn't happen in a land where free exercise of religion ranks first in the Bill of Rights."

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