

Pro-Life Wisconsin



Defending them all...

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House passes federal health care bill

Pro-life Stupak Amendment passes on bipartisan vote

The federal health reform bill, House Resolution (H.R.) 3962, cleared its first major hurdle by passing the U.S. House of Representatives on November 7th by a very narrow vote. The House voted 220 to 215 with 39 Democrats joining 176 Republicans to oppose the bill and 219 Democrats and 1 Republican in favor.

Importantly, the **Stupak Amendment** to restrict federal abortion funding in the bill passed 240 to 194 with one member voting present. Sixty-four Democrats joined 176 Republicans to pass the Stupak Amendment while 194 Democrats voted against the measure with one Republican voting present. Wisconsin Representatives voting for the Stupak Amendment included Republicans James Sensenbrenner, Paul Ryan and Tom Petri along with Democrat Dave Obey, while Democrats Tammy Baldwin, Gwen Moore, Ron Kind and Steve Kagen voted against the amendment.

The Stupak Amendment essentially retains current law concerning federal funding of abortion by placing Hyde Amendment-like abortion funding restrictions on H.R. 3962. Representative Bart Stupak (D-MI) offered an amendment that prohibits the so-called public option, or government-run insurance plan, from covering abortions except in cases of rape, incest or the life of the mother. Private policies purchased with federal subsidies, or “affordability credits,” will have the same restrictions. Women seeking abortion coverage will have to purchase separate insurance riders with their own money.

Stupak explained that his amendment applies current federal law to the proposed health care legislation. “We’re asking members to maintain current law and oppose federal funding on abortion,” he said.

Although they mirror current law, the exceptions in the Stupak Amendment are nonetheless troubling. But without the amendment massive taxpayer funding of ALL elective abortions will remain in the bill leading to the slaughter of millions more preborn children.

It is far from certain the Stupak Amendment will survive a vote in the Senate or during the final conference negotiations on the bill. There is a large block of pro-abortion legislators in the House who are committed to voting against the final health care reform bill should the Stupak language be included.

Additionally, there are several concerns with the health reform bill beyond abortion funding, including rationed care for the elderly, massive funding and coverage of birth control, end-of-life counseling that could encourage euthanasia, and the absence of any conscience protections for pharmacists or pharmacies.

Pro-Life Wisconsinites are calling and emailing U.S. Senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold urging them to oppose any federal health care reform bill that does not specifically exclude funding and coverage of ALL abortions – no exceptions. For contact information for Senators Kohl and Feingold, go to the following web link: <http://waml.legis.state.wi.us> or call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121. We are staying true to principle by pushing for a no-exceptions abortion funding restriction on the health care reform bill.

Please pray fervently for the conversion of President Barack Obama, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to the side of life. Please also pray for courage for the moderate Democrat congressional members to stand up and oppose their radical leadership. We thank all of you who have called, emailed or visited your congressmen this summer and fall. May God, the Lord of Life, bless our efforts.