

# FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

201 WEST PARK AVENUE  
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301-7715

PHONE (850) 222-3803  
FAX (850) 681-9548  
www.flacathconf.org



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October 28, 2009

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
Member of Congress  
716 Hart SOB  
Washington, DC 20510

***Re: Please support amendments to health care reform that incorporate longstanding policies against funding of abortion and in favor of conscience rights***

Dear Senator Nelson:

I write on behalf of all of the bishops of Florida to urge your support for a floor amendment to incorporate policies against abortion funding and in favor of conscience rights. If these serious concerns are not addressed, we urge that you oppose the final bill. No one should be required to pay for or participate in abortions.

It is our strong held belief, shared by a majority of Americans, that no one should be required to pay for or participate in abortions. A September 2009, nationwide survey commissioned by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has found widespread public opposition to including abortion in health care reform and majority support for conscience rights protection.

The bishops have been longtime supporters of reform that would allow health care to be affordable and accessible to everyone, particularly those who are poor and vulnerable including legal immigrants and their family members. As you vote on health care reform, please support longstanding and widely supported federal restrictions on abortion funding and mandates, and protections for rights of conscience in any new health care program.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Thomas G. Wenski, D.D.  
Bishop of Orlando