



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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Urgent Memorandum

Date: January 7, 2010

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: Nationwide USCCB Bulletin Insert on Health Care

During October and November, diocesan and parish leaders were asked by the U.S. Bishops' Conference to distribute two consecutive Nationwide Bulletin Inserts on health care reform. Thank you for your great cooperation in that effort. Since that time the following has occurred:

- The U.S. House passed health care reform that reaffirms the essential, longstanding and widely supported policy against using federal funds for elective abortion coverage.
- The U.S. Senate has rejected this policy and passed health care reform that requires federal funds to help subsidize and promote health plans that cover elective abortions. All purchasers of such plans will be required to pay for other people's abortions through a separate payment solely to pay for abortion.
- These two bills are being combined into one bill that both the House and Senate will vote on in final form.

Catholics need to make their voices heard insisting that health care reform protect the lives, dignity, consciences and health of all. Provisions against abortion funding and in favor of conscience protection, affordability, and immigrants' access to health care must be part of a fair and just health care reform bill. Unless and until these criteria are met, the final bill must be opposed.

The U.S. bishops have asked that the attached [Nationwide Bulletin](#) () on health care reform be printed or hand-stuffed in every parish bulletin and/or distributed in pews or at church entrances as soon as possible. Final House and Senate votes may take place soon. If your Arch/bishop approved disseminating the earlier bulletin inserts, consider this an update.

Also included are suggested [Announcements and a Prayer](#) ([Announcements and](#)). Please encourage parishioners to pray for this effort as well. More information can be found at [.usccb.org/](http://usccb.org/) .

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