

ABORTION FUNDING IN JEOPARDY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the “No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act” that is being introduced today:

In 1976, Illinois Rep. Henry Hyde succeeded in getting a ban on abortion funding by federal agencies, and it had sailed along without serious challenge until the Obama administration. Today, a bill to ensure that the Hyde bill remains intact is being introduced. It is occasioned by the fear that the health care bill signed by President Obama last March allows for the federal government to underwrite abortions.

When this issue was debated last year, the pro-life community was told to settle down—the bill did not fund or otherwise subsidize abortions. Unconvinced, Catholics, led by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), mounted a protest. The bill passed anyway. Now we are being told by abortion advocates such as NARAL that the legislation being introduced today should be condemned. But why? If abortion funding is already a moot issue, how could a bill that codifies the Hyde amendment undo things?

The obvious answer is that the pro-abortion community lied last year: they knew that the health care bill provided for the federal funding of abortions, and now they are worried that the “liberty” they champion is in jeopardy.

The USCCB is not seeking to overturn the health care bill, even though it knows it is flawed. But in his letter to the Congress on January 14, Archbishop Timothy Dolan, the head of the USCCB, explicitly said, “The Hyde amendment and other provisions which for many years have prevented federal funding of abortion have a proven record of reducing abortions, and should be codified in permanent law.” That is what this bi-partisan bill intends to do, and that is why it has the support of the USCCB, as well as practicing Catholics.