

# BIDEN      DECLARES      WAR      ON CATHOLIC   HOSPITALS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest attack by the Biden administration on religious liberty:

On May 10, the Biden administration announced that it would force doctors who can perform sex transition surgery to do so, regardless of their religious objections. This is a declaration of war on Catholic doctors and hospitals. It will also be contested in the federal courts.

Predictably, the media are billing this Health and Human Services decision, which applies Title IX of civil rights law to the rights of transgender persons, as an anti-discrimination measure, not as an attack on religious liberty. Title IX bars discrimination based on sex, but says nothing about transgender persons.

The Obama administration was the first to argue that Title IX should apply to transgender persons; the Trump administration disagreed; the Biden administration agrees with the Obama administration. In a May 10 news story by the Associated Press (AP) on this subject, it said that the Obama administration “relied on a broad understanding of sex shaped by a person’s inner sense of being male, female, neither or a combination.”

Paradoxically, this AP interpretation is both accurate and inaccurate at the same time.

It accurately conveys what both the Obama and Biden administrations believe: being male or female is a subjective judgment, one that allows a man or a woman to deny that they are a man or a woman, or any sex at all, for that matter. Which means they could be an acorn. It is inaccurate because it is a fiction: one’s “inner sense” of what sex one belongs to may be inaccurate. What matters is reality, not tales from

“The Twilight Zone.”

This assault on common sense and religious liberty began in 2015 when the Obama administration issued a mandate requiring doctors and hospitals to provide for transgender surgeries. They made no exemption for those who had religious objections.

The Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Health and Human Services announced new regulations that interpreted Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare) as meaning that “sex” would be redefined to include such things as “gender identity,” thus inventing rights for transgender persons.

According to Ryan T. Anderson and Roger Severino, “Under these guidelines, if a covered physician administers treatments or perform surgeries that *can* further gender transitions, that physician *must* provide them for gender transitions on the same terms, and insurance must cover it, regardless of the independent judgment of the physician” (*italics in the original*). It also denied religious exemptions.

Interestingly, doctors who worked for the Obama administration at the time said, “Based on a thorough review of the clinical evidence...there is not enough evidence to determine whether gender reassignment surgery improves health outcomes for [patients] with gender dysphoria.”

On President Trump’s last full day in office, January 19, a federal court struck down the transgender mandate forcing doctors to perform transgender surgeries. Last month, the Biden administration filed an appeal; it wants to deny religious exemptions. Now it is jumping the gun: Health and Human Services chief Xavier Becerra’s policy statement is seeking to do just that.

Pope Francis has observed that “biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.” The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

affirms what the Holy Father has said. It also opposes requiring religious organizations “to cover ‘transition’ procedures in their employee health insurance plans....”

It must be noted that Catholic hospitals do not deny routine health care to transgender persons. There is a difference between denying transgender persons treatment for Covid and forcing a Catholic doctor to make anatomical changes on the sexually confused.

The Biden administration’s war on Catholic hospitals is one of many policies it has promoted that endanger religious liberty. That they are being shoved down on our throats by a man who professes to be a “devout Catholic” is all the more nauseating.

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