BISHOPS PUSH FOR CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

Cardinal Timothy Dolan and Archbishop William Lori, who head the pro-life and religious liberty committees of the bishops' conference, respectively, recently urged congressmen to support the Conscience Protection Act of 2016.

The Act is necessary to protect the rights of healthcare workers and providers from being pressured into servicing an abortion. Dolan and Lori acknowledge that there are laws on the books that offer protection, but unfortunately attempts to coerce pro-life Catholics into performing an abortion have not ceased, and existing laws may not be enough to ward off a new round of demands.

Cardinal Dolan and Archbishop Lori asked members of the House to "recall that rejection of abortion is an integral part of the Hippocratic oath that for many centuries has helped define medicine as a *profession*, an ethical vocation dedicated to the life and well-being of one's patients" (italic in the original).

Noting that while abortion is legal, the archbishops also noted that the U.S. Supreme Court has acknowledged that abortion is "inherently different from other medical procedures," and that the government may help to "encourage childbirth" over abortion. That is an important concession that must be acted upon.

There is another reason why it is wise for the bishops' conference to undertake this initiative: the ACLU. Over the last several years, the ACLU has sued one Catholic hospital after another, trying to force them into performing abortions. Indeed, they have made this matter their number-one issue affecting religious liberty. While the civil libertarians have

lost continuously in the courts, they are determined to harass and intimidate Catholic institutions into compliance with their pro-abortion position.

The pro-abortion lobby has never believed in "pro-choice"—they have always believed in denying the choice of life, so zealous are they in championing the cause of death in the womb. That is one more good reason why the Conscience Protection Act of 2016 needs to be passed.