

BISHOPS STAND FAST ON HHS MANDATE



Bill Donohue comments on a letter sent yesterday by Cardinal Timothy Dolan, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), to the nation's bishops expressing the unanimous resolve

of the USCCB's Administrative Committee to continue the fight against the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate:

Cardinal Dolan laid out the top three concerns of the bishops: (1) the HHS mandate unfairly defines religious employer in such a way as to reduce "religious freedom to the freedom of worship by dividing our community between houses of worship and ministries of service" (2) it reduces these ministries to a "second-class" status that unfairly burdens them (3) it does nothing to relieve the objections of for-profit businesses run by practicing Catholics.

The letter comes at a time when some have questioned the resolve of the bishops to fight the HHS mandate. Cardinal Dolan has put that concern to rest. The first objection outlined in the letter is key.

For over 200 years, Americans have cited their First Amendment right to religious liberty as the cornerstone of their inalienable rights. Then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton effectively tried to deep six this right by reinterpreting our God-given right as "freedom to worship"; President Barack Obama then began echoing her neologism in public.

Freedom to worship is what dictatorships observe: people are free to worship indoors—just don't take it outside. In other

words, this is an attempt by the federal government to privatize religion by limiting the scope of its exercise. If we did this to speech, it would stifle it. Religion is either freely and publicly expressed, or it is abridged.

The time has come for the HHS mandate to be withdrawn. To sign the Catholic League petition asking the Obama administration to pull the HHS mandate, click [here](#).