

# EUTHANASIA AND HEALTH CARE REFORM

In late July there were growing concerns over Section 1233 of H.R. 3200, the health care reform bill that was introduced in the House.

There was language in this section of the bill that implied that the federal government may become involved in euthanasia. So over two days, July 27-28, the Catholic League staff contacted the following persons, committees or offices looking for clarification:

- Rep. Nancy Pelosi
- Rep. John Dingell
- Rep. Rob Andrews
- Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr.
- Rep. Charles Rangel
- Rep. Pete Stark
- Rep. Henry Waxman
- Rep. George Miller
- Rep. Dale Kildee
- Rep. Carolyn Maloney
- Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius
- HHS Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
- HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Aging
- HHS Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation for Discretionary Health Programs
- HHS Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation for Mandatory Health Programs
- HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
- HHS Congressional Liaison Office; HHS Office of Human Services Policy

- HHS Office of Disability, Aging and Long-Term Care Policy
- HHS Office of Planning and Policy Support
- HHS Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation for Human Services
- Ways and Means Committee
- Education and Labor Committee
- Energy and Commerce Committee
- Oversight and Government Reform Committee
- Budget Committee
- White House Health Reform Office.

No one with whom we spoke said the government is entering the business of euthanasia. But this is not enough. We needed to know exactly what was meant by the following phrase contained in that section of the bill: “An explanation by the practitioner of the continuum of end-of-life services and supports available....”

We also needed to know exactly what was meant by “The Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register proposed quality measures on end of life care and advanced care planning....”

On August 13, the Senate dropped the provision from the legislation. According to Sen. Chuck Grassley, the provision had been dropped because it could be misinterpreted or implemented incorrectly.