

# HHS RULES REVISED

Revised Health and Human Services (HHS) rules were released on February 1.

In two separate statements, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and its president, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, made plain their interest in pursuing the ongoing conversation with Obama administration officials on the HHS mandate. Their goal, as expressed by Cardinal Dolan, is to reach “an acceptable solution” to this issue.

The Catholic hierarchy wants to broaden the understanding of what constitutes a religious ministry. Cardinal Dolan also addressed funding for abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization, and contraception, saying “there remains the possibility that ministries may yet be forced to fund and facilitate such morally illicit activities.” The third issue of concern is the right of those who own a business in the private-sector not to fund such activities.

The best of all possible worlds would be for the Obama administration to roll back its mandate, effectively granting the status quo ante. But that seems unlikely. This is not a settled issue, and the door is open for our side to secure the kinds of religious liberty protections we need. However, because serious discussions are under way, we don’t need our side blasting the administration at this juncture. Unfortunately, some groups have done just that.

From the beginning, the Catholic League has been critical of the HHS mandate while being supportive of the delicate negotiations. It is not always an easy walk, but it is absolutely essential