

HOUSE BILL ON ABORTION RESTRICTIONS WELCOMED

The House of Representatives passed a bill today, 229-189, that would allow those hospitals and insurance companies that refuse to perform or pay for abortions to do so without penalties; they may maintain access to Medicare and other federal funding. This obviously has grave implications for Catholic hospitals.

Catholic League president William Donohue issued the following statement on this issue today:

“Abortion-rights advocates are not, ipso facto, anti-Catholic for making Catholic hospitals comply with their vision of public policy. But it remains true that there are many in the pro-abortion community who seek to levy penalties on Catholic hospitals *because* they are anti-Catholic (e.g., Catholics for a Free Choice, a group supported by the Democratic National Committee). That is why this bill is so important. It protects real freedom of choice by insulating Catholic hospitals from those who would use the state to trump the doctrinal prerogatives of religious institutions.

“The Bush administration is to be particularly commended for its effort in this regard. The free exercise of religion that Catholic institutions ought to enjoy without debate or rancor has now taken a giant leap forward. We hope the Senate passes the bill without emendation.”