

# OBAMA PIVOTS ON CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

In his address to the 2009 graduating class at the University of Notre Dame, President Barack Obama said yesterday that he supports conscience rights for healthcare workers. "Let's honor the conscience of those who disagree with abortion," he said, "and draft a sensible conscience clause, and make sure that all of our health care policies are grounded in clear ethics and sound science, as well as respect for the equality of women."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue applauded the president:

Last August, the Bush administration strengthened the conscience rights of healthcare workers in a new set of guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). But in March the Obama administration said it was going to rescind these rights. It specifically said, "The Department [HHS] is proposing to rescind in its entirety the final rule."

Thus far, no final decision has been made. But given what President Obama said yesterday, it seems clear that he is now prepared to rescind the decision that was made rescinding conscience rights. For this he should be commended. We look forward to reading the revised proposal.