

RIGHTS OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS THREATENED

It was reported today that the Obama administration is planning to rescind the rule issued in December by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that protects the rights of health care workers at federally-funded facilities to refuse to perform or be involved in medical procedures that violate their consciences, such as abortion. The "conscience rule" went into effect last month.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue discussed the ramifications of this action:

"This regulation gives health care workers the right to be free from discriminatory edicts invoked by those who have no respect for their conscience rights. No one in the health care field should ever be compelled by law to perform or assist in a procedure that violates his or her conscience. This should be an elementary right, yet there are those who want to trespass on it.

"This would be another step in the wrong direction for an administration which is promoting abortion by overturning the Mexico City Policy, promising to support the United Nations Population Fund and considering the nomination of radical abortion rights supporter Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to be the Secretary of HHS. This action would be the most offensive since it compromises the rights of Catholics to act according to their conscience.

"It is imperative that President Obama not rescind this morally critical regulation. Catholics will be watching very closely."