

# SEBELIUS AND CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

At the close of the Bush administration, the department of health and human services (HHS) issued regulations protecting the conscience rights of health care workers. The Obama administration is proposing to undo those rights. The person likely to enforce the new regulations is Kathleen Sebelius, the nominee for secretary of HHS.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue sees a problem:

“If Kathleen Sebelius is confirmed as the secretary for HHS, she may face a real dilemma: She may be called upon to enforce regulations that strip Catholic health-care workers of their right not to perform, or assist in performing, an abortion. She would then effectively create a dilemma for those doctors and nurses—they would either do what they are ordered to do and risk excommunication, or suffer the consequences. And given that there are more than 2,000 members of the American Association of Pro-Life OB-GYNs alone, it is safe to say that the impending problem could explode.

*“The Catholic Catechism* is not ambiguous: ‘Formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to this crime against human life.’ In other words, if Sebelius enforces regulations which deny conscience rights, she will ineluctably put herself on a collision course with the Catholic Church. Is this what the Obama administration wants?

“In 2003, Gov. Sebelius vetoed a law mandating health standards for abortion clinics in Kansas. Her reasoning? The problem with the bill, she said, was that it allowed ‘the legislature, instead of physicians and medical personnel, [to] regulate health care procedures.’ If her interest in

protecting the autonomy rights of health care workers vis-à-vis the state was genuine in that instance, then surely she could invoke the same principle again and insist on conscience rights. The time to do so is now: the Obama administration is about to begin a 30-day period allowing for comment on this subject.”

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## **OBAMA CHOOSES PRO-ABORTION ZEALOT FOR HHS**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue speaks to the nomination of Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius as the new secretary for health and human services (HHS):

“Last week, President Obama called Milwaukee Archbishop Timothy Dolan to congratulate him on his appointment as the new archbishop of New York, effective April 15. That was a nice statement. But it didn’t cost him anything. His appointment of Kathleen Sebelius—one of the most extreme pro-abortion zealots in the nation—to head HHS was not a nice statement. And it will cost him.

“Catholics do not expect that abortion-rights presidents will go out of their way to choose pro-life Catholics to be in their administration. But they also don’t expect them to go out of their way to offend them. Obama has done just that. As I said last night on the CBS Evening News, ‘She is the champion of abortion rights right through term, and for Obama to choose somebody who sews such division within the Catholic community to head HHS really is an insult to Catholics.’ Indeed, she has been publicly criticized by the last three archbishops of Kansas for her radical views on abortion.

“Sebelius is best friends with Dr. George Tiller, one of the most radical abortion doctors in American history. She has wine and dined him, and has accepted money from him. The fact that he has performed more than 60,000 abortions doesn’t faze her. None of which bodes well given her duties at HHS. Moreover, she has worked against the health-care rights of women: she refused to license abortion clinics in Kansas.

“Sebelius once signed a law that calls for the killer of a pregnant woman to be charged with two murders. Someone should ask her who the other person is.”

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## **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.”

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## **SEBELIUS SPINS HERSELF**

Word that Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius might be tapped as the new secretary of health and human services has a lot of people talking. Catholic League president Bill Donohue is one of them:

“Kathleen Sebelius is a master at spinning herself. In 2002, she described herself as ‘a practicing Catholic.’ But not always. For example, she opposes capital punishment and animal abuse, but supports abortion. Evidently, being a ‘practicing Catholic’ allows her to protect serial murderers, cats and dogs, but not innocent unborn children. But she does not claim ignorance. In 2006, she said, ‘My Catholic faith teaches me that life is sacred. Personally, I believe abortion is wrong.’ She said this immediately after she vetoed a bill which would have strengthened her state’s ban on late-term abortions.

“Her spinning gets downright dizzy when one considers her close relationship with Dr. George Tiller. This is a man who boasts of performing over 60,000 abortions—he claims to do 100

a week—and who specializes in killing kids in the second and third trimester. In 2007, Sebelius invited Tiller and his staff to a party in her home, thanking him for his generosity for contributing to her campaign.

“Tiller knows exactly what he is doing. On his website, he cites that one of the ‘Three Rules of the Practice’ of late-term abortion care is ‘*Time, patience, and the baby will come.*’ (His italics.) The *baby* will come?

“I’ve saved the best for last. Tiller’s Women’s Health Care Services advertises a chaplaincy program that provides ‘sacraments such as baptism of the still born [*sic*] fetus and blessings for the aborted fetus.’ Yet no one—including Tiller—offers baptism or blessings for shoes or salamanders. Just kids. We called and asked why the distinction between the baptism for the stillborn and blessings for the aborted baby. Chaplain Diane Warren just laughed and said they would do whatever was requested. But of course—it’s all about choice! The kind of choice that Sebelius loves.”

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## SEBELIUS—ENEMY OF THE UNBORN—TO HHS?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a front-page story in today’s *New York Times* that says Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius is the president’s top choice as secretary of health and human services:

“Almost all of those working in the Obama administration are pro-abortion, and the expectation is that almost all future appointees will be champions of abortion rights, as well. Fortunately, most are not in a position to affect abortion

policy. One glaring exception is the secretary of health and human services. Unfortunately, Gov. Sebelius, a Catholic, may get the job.

“Sebelius’ support for abortion is so far off-the-charts that she has been publicly criticized by the last three archbishops of Kansas City. In 1992, when Sebelius was a state legislator, Archbishop Ignatius Strecker rebuked her for leading what he dubbed a ‘death-march of the unborn.’ When Sebelius became governor in 2003, Archbishop James Keleher, citing her abortion record, asked her to move her inauguration interfaith service from Topeka’s Assumption Catholic Church. She refused. The current archbishop, Joseph Naumann, called her out on the issue: he challenged her to name one instance in her long legislative career where she supported limiting abortion rights. She could not. He subsequently asked her not to go to Communion.

“None of these archbishops overreacted. Not only does Sebelius support the now outlawed practice of killing babies who are 80 percent born, so-called partial-birth abortion, she has accepted donations from one of the most notorious practitioners of this Nazi-style act—Dr. George Tiller. Moreover, she even hosted a dinner for him in the Governor’s Mansion.

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## **OBAMA’S CATHOLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL: HAS IT BEEN DISSOLVED?**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments today on Sen. Barack Obama’s Catholic National Advisory Council:

“On May 2, I issued a news release calling on Sen. Obama to dissolve his Catholic National Advisory Council. My principal reason for doing so was his selection of dissident Catholics to advise him: for example, most of the public officials are so pro-abortion that they had a 100 percent NARAL record. On May 8, most members of the Advisory Council faxed me a letter defending themselves; I answered the same day taking them to task for their lame defense. But it now appears that my initial recommendation—to dissolve the group—may have been accepted.

“There is no mention anywhere on the Obama website of the Catholic National Advisory Council. On Friday, we placed three phone calls to his campaign: two to media relations and one to Mark Linton, Obama’s National Catholic Outreach Coordinator. We were told each time that someone would get back to us, but no one did. I then personally e-mailed Linton informing him of the three phone calls, requesting that he respond to my question: ‘I would like to know whether the Catholic National Advisory Council for Sen. Obama is still operative.’ He has not replied.

“It would appear, then, that the group no longer exists. It is not hard to understand why. After being criticized by the Catholic League, Archbishop Joseph Naumann of Kansas City rebuked one of Obama’s Catholic advisors, Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius: she was instructed not to present herself for Holy Communion (she is a rabid defender of abortion). At about the same time, radical Chicago priest Rev. Michael Pfleger bailed on Obama by withdrawing his name from the Advisory Council. Now we find that there is no listing for the group on the Obama website.

“Looks like the Obama campaign’s decision to quietly drop its Advisory Council didn’t work. We found out, and we’ve never been accused of being quiet.

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# CENSORS TARGET KANSAS CITY ARCHBISHOP

On May 9, Kansas City Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann publicly asked Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius to refrain from going to Communion. Sebelius not only supports abortion-on-demand, and works closely with Planned Parenthood, she has received funding from Dr. George Tiller of Wichita; he is nationally known for performing late-term abortions.

Over the past few weeks, Archbishop Naumann has been roundly criticized for his decision. Defending him is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“A small group called Catholic Democrats has blasted Archbishop Naumann for using ‘Holy Communion as a political weapon to take her [Sebelius] down.’ The *National Catholic Reporter*, which runs ads by anti-Catholic and pro-abortion groups, labeled Naumann ‘rigid’ for using ‘political tactics.’ Tim Rutten of the *Los Angeles Times* condemned him for setting in motion ‘about as nasty and as utterly avoidable a church-state confrontation as you’re likely to see.’ *Kansas City Community News* opinion page editor Bob Sigman agreed, saying Naumann’s decision ‘has serious consequences for those who believe in the firm line between church and state.’ And Barbara Shelly, who sits on the editorial board of the *Kansas City Star*, takes the same line, branding his request ‘harsh.’

“All of them are hypocrites. Democratic candidates for public office have been receiving endorsements, and in some cases contributions, in African American churches for decades, yet none of them see a violation of church and state. The reason they are upset with Archbishop Naumann is because Sebelius is



on Sen. Barack Obama's shortlist as a vice presidential running mate. They would make an excellent pair: she supports partial-birth abortions and he supports selective infanticide.

"Archbishop Naumann said it best when he met with Sebelius: 'I challenged the governor to produce a single instance in her legislative or executive career [which spans 30 years] where she has supported any effort to limit abortions.' She could not. Which explains why her fans love her."