

Obama Helps Finance Overseas Abortions

By overturning the Mexico City Policy, or the so-called 'global gag rule,' President Obama will free up taxpayer money to finance abortions abroad.



Jan. 23, 2009 – The day after the 36th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, President Barack Obama signed an executive order repealing the so-called Mexico City Policy, a regulation from the Reagan-era that prohibited U.S. funds from going to organizations that promote or perform abortions abroad.

Known by critics as the “global gag rule,” the Mexico City Policy bans organizations from promoting abortion overseas. Depending on his view on abortion, nearly every president has either upheld or repealed the policy since Ronald Reagan established it in 1984.

Though Obama has been publicly evasive on the life issue, most observers expected him to take a strong pro-abortion position after assuming office.

According to the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), revoking the Mexico City Policy will end up diverting millions of taxpayer dollars into the hands of organizations that aggressively promote abortion in developing, overpopulated countries.

“President Obama not long ago told the American people that he would support policies to reduce abortions, but today he is effectively guaranteeing more abortions by funding groups that promote abortion as a method of population control,” said Douglas Johnson, legislative director at the NRLC. “Obama’s order will predictably result in a redirection of funds to groups such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation, which are ideologically committed to the doctrine

that abortion on demand must be universally available as a birth control method.”

Obama’s support for abortion access has forced him to walk a political tightrope with religious conservatives he courted on the campaign stump last year.

Yesterday, CBN News’ senior correspondent David Brody reported Obama would not overturn the Mexico City Policy on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade because the new president wanted to “stress the need for reducing abortions in this country rather than focus on the divisive tit for tat policy reversals of the past.”

“The point here is that President Obama has opted out of the ‘in your face’ politics of the past,” Brody wrote. “He may reverse Mexico City Policy at some point ... but today is a day where Obama took the more tactful and less confrontational approach.”

Still, the pro-life community has been bracing itself for a ramped up battle over abortion since Obama was elected in November. One reason is because Obama has promised abortion advocates in the past that as president he would sign into law the Freedom of Choice Act. Opponents say the highly controversial bill codifies Roe v. Wade, lifts most restrictions on abortion and forces religious hospitals to offer abortions.

Anti-abortion activists also expect Obama to revoke the “right of conscience” regulation passed by former President Bush last month, which allows medical staff to refuse to participate in abortion practices that they object to on moral grounds.

One of Bush’s final acts as president last week was to declare Sunday, Jan. 18, the National Sanctity of Human Life Day.

Meanwhile, a group called 40 Days for Life launched a 40-day prayer and fasting campaign this week to end abortion. Participants in more than 100 U.S. cities are gathering each

day for peaceful vigils outside abortion centers and Planned Parenthood offices. **—Paul Steven Ghiringhelli**