

Pro-Life Democrats Ready to Oppose Health Bill

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✖ A dozen Democratic lawmakers have promised to vote against health reform legislation if language strictly prohibiting any federal funding of abortion is not included.

Rep. Bart Stupak of Michigan, who sponsored an amendment in the House bill that prevents government funding for abortion, said he supports health care reform but not the Senate-passed bill.

"If you go to page 2,069 through page 2,078, you would find in there the federal government would directly subsidize abortions," Stupak told *Good Morning America* Thursday. "We're not going to vote for this bill with that kind of language in there."

He said 11 other Democrats who supported the House bill also would oppose the Senate version of the bill if no changes are made.

"I mean let's face it, I want to see health care," Stupak said. "But we're not going to bypass some principles and beliefs that we feel strongly about."

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said the Senate bill does not amend the government's current policy against public funding for abortion.

"I hope that when the bill is in its final form and people have a chance to look at it, I think they'll understand that this bill does not change the status quo on abortion," she

told *Good Morning America*. “They will realize that there will be no federal funding for abortion. That’s what the president has pledged all along. This is not about an abortion debate. It’s about health reform.”

On Wednesday, President Obama called on Congress to pass health reform legislation, nudging them to use a process called reconciliation, which bypasses the Senate rule that requires 60 votes to end debate. Instead, reconciliation requires only a majority vote.

On Thursday, the White House gave Congress a March 18 deadline to pass a final health reform bill. That gives lawmakers two weeks to pass a version of the Senate bill in the House, then a second bill that would include any adjustments made in both chambers.