

Pro-Life Groups Urge Congress to Protect Constitutional Rights

A pro-life coalition launched a national campaign on Monday, urging Congress to include language protecting conscience rights in any upcoming continuing resolutions to fund the government.

The coalition, led by the national pro-life Susan B. Anthony List (SBA List), includes more than 30 national and statewide groups who disagree with the Obama administration's abortion-inducing drug mandate. The coalition website features a grass roots action center where people of faith and conscience can contact their representatives.

"There must be no religious 'test' by the government as to who and what type of entities are entitled to a conscience," says SBA List President Marjorie Dannenfelser. "We demand respect for non-religious entities such as the Susan B. Anthony List that recognize the taking of human life is the antithesis of health care. Congress must act immediately to ensure the right of citizens to be free from government compulsion of this most fundamental issue."

Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America, explains that the Obama administration's claim of an **Obamacare** opt-out is not good enough.

"The so-called HHS Mandate 'opt-out' is not really an opt-out when only some of the prisoners of conscience are released while the rest are kept hostage," Hawkins notes. "Organizations and employers like Hobby Lobby and even human rights organizations like Students for Life of America are still being forced to provide abortion pills to employees."

“The **First Amendment** applies to *all* Americans, not just the select few the Obama administration decides to give exemptions to. We must enact comprehensive conscience protections immediately to ensure our rights are upheld.”

Family Research Council’s Vice President for Government Affairs, Tom McClusky, is urging Congress to pass the legislation.

“It was the **Obama administration** that decided access to abortifacients, sterilization and contraception trumped the conscience rights of American citizens. Congress is the last line of defense for religious liberty and they need to pass strong conscience legislation today,” he explains.

“Since the Obama administration continues to callously trample Americans’ religious liberties,” declares Penny Nance, president and CEO Concerned Women for America, “we call on Congress to boldly act to protect our convictions by including conscience legislation in any must-pass legislation to fund the government. When Americans are forced to deny their deeply held religious convictions, it is not called ‘balance,’ it’s called ‘tyranny.’”

This effort comes on the heels of a nationwide postcard campaign launched by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) as well as a letter to Congress written by Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, chair of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Liberty.

In his letter, Archbishop Lori urged Congress to protect **religious liberty** and conscience in any funding legislation and expressed his disappointment with the Obama administration’s recent proposed changes to the HHS Mandate.

As the **Affordable Care Act** is implemented, some former members of Congress are publicly lamenting their vote for it, which cost them their job during the 2010 midterm elections. Both former Representatives Bart Stupak and Kathy Dahlkemper have

decried the fact that with the HHS Mandate, President Obama violated the abortion funding “compromise” they thought they had secured.