

# Why keep the conscience rights regulation?

## 1. Protect patient access to health care.

Without the conscience clause, healthcare access for hundreds of thousands of patients nationwide will be threatened and healthcare costs will rise because of the lack of facilities to provide needed services.

Each year, one in six patients is cared for in a Catholic hospital. Without conscience protections, many faith-based hospitals that provide services to millions of patients may shut down rather than perform abortions.

95% of physicians in a national poll agreed, "I would rather stop practicing medicine altogether than be forced to violate my conscience." Driving faith-based professionals out of medicine would strand hundreds of thousands of patients, especially those in rural vicinities who rely on only a few doctors in their areas. Healthcare costs will rise because of the lack of doctors and medical facilities.

## 2. Preserve the patient-physician relationship.

The conscience clause is a necessary regulation to preserve the exclusive patient to doctor relationship. Without it, the government will be able to effectively limit where patients can go for care.

By giving ultimatums to healthcare providers on whether or not they perform a certain procedure they are morally opposed to, government is limiting the number of doctors a patient can see and interfering in individual care.

If the Administration rescinds the conscience clause, it is only the first step towards allowing the government into personal, and sometimes life and death, decisions.

## 3. Protect Hippocratic and faith-based healthcare professionals from discrimination.

Physicians who adhere to the Hippocratic Oath promise not to perform abortion and to guard the sanctity of human life. Abortion-related mandates force these physicians to either violate the Hippocratic Oath or lose their career in medicine. Faith-based healthcare professionals report widespread discrimination because of conscience:

- 32% have "been pressured to refer a patient for a procedure to which [they] had moral, ethical, or religious objections.
- 26% have "been pressured to write a prescription for a medication to which [they] had moral, ethical, or religious objections
- 33% have "considered not pursuing a career in a particular medical specialty because of attitudes prevalent in that specialty that is not considered tolerant of [their] moral, ethical or religious beliefs."
- Medical students report opting out of careers in obstetrics and gynecology for fear of discrimination.
- Pro-life prospective medical students report discrimination in admission interviews.

## 4. Heed overwhelming public support for the regulation and opposition to rescinding it.

A nationwide survey conducted by *The Polling Company, Inc.* and completed in April 2009 revealed:

- 63% support conscience protection regulation  
28% oppose conscience protection regulation
- 30% support Obama administration proposal  
**62% oppose Obama administration proposal**
- 58% support the Hyde-Weldon Amendment underlying the regulation  
31% oppose the Hyde-Weldon Amendment underlying the regulation
- 25% more likely to vote for Member who supported *eliminating* rule  
54% less likely to vote for Member who supported *eliminating* rule