



Pro-Life Activities

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Cardinal Dolan and Archbishop Lori Commend House Passage, Call on Congress to Enact the Conscience Protection Bill

July 13, 2016

WASHINGTON-Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan and Archbishop William E. Lori - as chairmen of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities and Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, respectively - commended the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the Conscience Protection Act of 2016 (S. 304) on July 13 in a 245-182 bipartisan vote.

"We're grateful to House Speaker Paul Ryan for bringing the Conscience Protection Act to a vote, to all the co-sponsors for their leadership, and to those members of both parties who support the civil right of conscience," Cardinal Dolan and Archbishop Lori said. "Even those who disagree on the life issue should be able to respect the conscience rights of those who wish not to be involved in supporting abortion."

If enacted into law, the Conscience Protection Act "will ensure that those providing much-needed health care and health coverage can continue to do so without being forced to help destroy innocent unborn children," they wrote. "It will also provide an effective remedy to victims of abortion coercion."

"The vast majority of medical personnel - and 85% of OB-GYNs, specifically - do not want to be involved in abortion. Whether their reasons are religious or non-religious, their conscientious objection to abortion is worthy of the highest respect and protection," they said.

The Conscience Protection Act offers much-needed protection for religious employers, as well. "In light of disturbing recent developments, even churches and religious organizations are being required to cover abortions in violation of their beliefs," they said.

"We now urge Congress to move this vital legislation forward as part of this year's must-pass appropriations package," Cardinal Dolan and Archbishop Lori said.

For more on the bishops' promotion of conscience rights, including a video about a nurse who was coerced to take part in a late-term abortion, visit:

www.usccb.org/conscience.

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