



Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities

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THE CAMPAIGN TO FORCE HOSPITALS TO PROVIDE ABORTION

Forty-five states and the federal government protect the right of health care providers to decline involvement in abortion. Pro-abortion groups seek to abolish these legal protections.

Consider the following:

Abortion Access Project

Operating in twenty-four states, the project's goal is "increasing access to abortion services by expanding . . . the number of hospitals offering abortion services." The project admits that its tactics include "pressuring hospitals" and it does so through both political and legal pressure. The "Hospital Access Collaborative" division reports on the state projects' legal and regulatory interventions challenging mergers. See www.abortionaccess.org/AAP/campaigns/hospital/hospital.htm (accessed 09/07/03).

American Civil Liberties Union - Reproductive Freedom Project: "Religious Refusals and Reproductive Rights." The ACLU has published a report and advocacy kit aimed at requiring all hospitals, including Catholic hospitals, to provide abortions. The report argues: "When . . . religiously affiliated organizations move into secular pursuits— such as providing medical care or social services to the public or running a business – they should no longer be insulated from secular laws. In the public world, they should play by public rules." ACLU, "Religious Refusals and Reproductive Rights," January 2002, page 11, www.aclu.org/ReproductiveRights/ReproductiveRights.cfm?ID=10516&c=30 (accessed 09/10/03).

George Gund Foundation, Pro-Choice Resource Center and ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project National Meeting

"Much of the debate focused on strategy, with participants wondering whether it was better to work toward improving and narrowing conscience clauses or to fight to eliminate them altogether . . . Although reproductive rights activists should still work to improve conscientious exemptions, [ACLU executive director Ira Glasser] said, their ultimate goal should be getting rid of them." See "Conscientious Exemptions and Reproductive Rights," Executive Summary, page 10, www.prochoiceresource.org/about/CERR_Body.pdf (accessed 09/07/03)

In one session at the national meeting, the group analyzed a sample conscience protection which "allowed hospitals, their staffs, or 'any other person' to opt out of providing abortions, sterilizations, and contraception if they objected to such services." The participants decided "the measure couldn't be fixed and should be opposed at all costs." *Id.* at page 11.

Maryland NARAL Hospital Provider Project

"The goal of the *Hospital Provider Project* is to increase access to abortion services by requiring Maryland hospitals to provide abortion . . ." www.mdnaral.org/initiatives.htm (accessed

04/05/2002).

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

“While everyone has the right to their [sic] opinions about reproductive health care, including . . . abortion, it is important to remember that the conscience that matters most belongs to the patient . . . Health care providers who object to providing certain services still have an obligation to respect the rights of their patients and to enable them to access the health care they need.”
www.plannedparenthood.org/articles/exemptions.html (accessed 09/12/03).

Pro-Choice Resource Center

“Through its Spotlight Campaign, PCRC [Pro-Choice Resource Center] organizes regional meetings to build a network of opposition to ‘conscience’ or patient abandonment clauses that allow doctors, pharmacists and entire hospital systems to deny women access to services like abortion . . .” *See* www.prochoiceresource.org/programs/rg_meet.html (accessed 09/05/03).

“Right now, so-called ‘conscience’ clause laws are in place in 45 of 50 states, allowing doctors, pharmacists, clinics, hospitals, managed care plans and even employers to refuse to provide, or to pay for, abortion . . . The MergerWatch program is taking action to expose and overturn these ‘conscience’ clauses.” *See* www.prochoiceresource.org/programs/spot.html (accessed 09/05/03).

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