



## **SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS HEALTH SERVICES, INC.**

**Our Catholic voice aligns us with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in continuing our opposition to President Obama's healthcare reform bill. All 13 hospitals in the Sisters of St. Francis system believe that healthcare means taking care of the health needs of all, across the human life span.**

The Sisters of St. Francis includes: Saint Anthony Medical Center in Crown Point, IN; Saint Anthony Memorial Health Center in Michigan City, IN; St. Clare Medical Center in Crawfordsville, IN; St. Elizabeth East and St. Elizabeth Central in Lafayette, IN; St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers in Beech Grove, Indianapolis and Mooresville, IN; St. James Hospital & Health Centers in Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields, IL; Saint Margaret Mercy Health Center in Dyer, IN; Saint Margaret Mercy Healthcare Center in Hammond, IN; and Franciscan Physicians Hospital, LLC in Munster, IN.

Recently news broke that the Catholic Health Association (CHA) supports President Obama's healthcare bill. The vote is imminent.

The news probably caused some confusion in the communities we serve and on this rare occasion, we stand apart from the CHA on this issue.

### **What you should know:**

- The Sisters of St. Francis Health Services stands with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in opposing the current healthcare reform bill
- Along with the USCCB, we believe that healthcare reform is a moral imperative and an urgent national priority
- We support reform that protects the life and dignity of every person from conception to natural death
- We oppose President Obama's current bill because it still contains language that would allow the federal funding of abortion, as well as restrictions on conscience clauses that protect healthcare providers (individuals and institutions) who morally object to abortion

In a March 16, 2010, Zenit.org interview with Cardinal Francis George, President of the USCCB, the Cardinal discussed two principles that underlie the concerns of the USCCB:

1. Healthcare means taking care of the health needs of all, across the human life span
2. The expansion of healthcare should not involve the expansion of abortion funding and of policies forcing everyone to pay for abortions

Cardinal George concluded, *"Because these principles have not been respected, despite the good that the bill under construction intends or might achieve, the Catholic bishops regretfully hold that it must be opposed unless and until these serious moral problems are addressed."*

The Sisters of St. Francis agree with the USCCB. We remain committed to keeping in place policies that restrict federal funding for abortion and that protect moral conscience regarding abortion. If Congress disregards these policies in the final bill, we have no choice but to oppose the legislation.

### **Contact your legislators**

With healthcare reform so badly needed in this country, it is our responsibility to ask our legislators to ensure that any national healthcare reform legislation provides respect for human life and respect for the conscience rights of healthcare providers and professionals.

**To reach a Representative in the U.S. House of Representatives, go to [house.gov](http://house.gov).** Enter your Zip code and your congressional district's representative will automatically receive your message.

**To reach a U.S. Senator, go to [senate.gov](http://senate.gov).** Enter your home state and your Senators will be listed with addresses and online contact links. Indiana is represented by Senators Evan Bayh and Richard G. Lugar. Illinois is represented by Senators Roland Burris and Richard Durbin. Michigan is represented by Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow.