



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on November 23, 2011

Pelosi Ridicules Catholics' "Conscience Thing" on Abortion Requirement

Pelosi made those remarks in response to a question from the *Post* concerning her comments on the Protect Life Act (H.R. 358), a bill that passed the House of Representatives in October. That bill was itself a response to an ObamaCare mandate "that would require all private health plans to cover sterilizations and contraceptives, including those that cause abortion, under the broad definition of 'preventive services,'" explains former Colorado Rep. Bob Beauprez in a [Townhall.com column](#). Beauprez continues:



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Since the ObamaCare legislation also requires every citizen to buy health insurance, the government mandate would force Catholics to buy health care plans that violate Catholic doctrine. Catholic insurance agents would face the additional dilemma of selling a product that violates the moral teachings of the Church, or change professions.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops objected to the newly proposed mandate as a violation of Conscience Clause protections and the First Amendment. "Indeed, such nationwide government coercion of religious people and groups to sell, broker, or purchase 'services' to which they have a moral or religious objection represents an unprecedented attack on religious liberty," the bishops said.

The Protect Life Act would permit healthcare providers to opt out of performing or covering these procedures if doing so would violate their consciences. In addition, it would formally codify the ban on federal funding of abortion that was once included in ObamaCare but was stripped out prior to the bill's passage and replaced by a less comprehensive and more easily repealed executive order.

While the Protect Life Act would seem to be a reasonable accommodation to religious freedom, Pelosi would have none of it. She called the bill "savagely" and said, "When the Republicans vote for this bill today, they will be voting to say that women can die on the floor and healthcare providers do not have to intervene, if this bill is passed. It's just appalling."

The *Post* gave Pelosi an opportunity to dial back her rhetoric. Instead, she chose to up the ante, continuing to claim that the bill would result in women's deaths and then ridiculing Catholics who think otherwise:

In retrospect, does she think that assessment went too far? Not at all, she said: "They would" let women die on the floor, she said. "They would! Again, whatever their intention is, this is the effect."

Catholic health-care providers in particular have long said they'd have to go out of business without the conscience protections that Pelosi says amount to letting hospitals "say to a woman, 'I'm sorry you



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could die' if you don't get an abortion." Those who dispute that characterization "may not like the language," she said, "but the truth is what I said. I'm a devout Catholic and I honor my faith and love it ... but they have this conscience thing" that she insists put[s] women at physical risk, although Catholic providers strongly disagree.

How dare anyone let his "conscience thing" get in the way of the taxpayer-funded abortion-on-demand agenda, objects the Minority Leader. In fact, says Pelosi, the hands of those who dare to uphold biblical truth will be stained with the blood of women who died after being refused needed abortions. Never mind that if one hospital or insurer refuses an abortion, there are plenty of others that will comply. And never mind that, as Beauprez points out, the Protect Life Act "contained exceptions as found in the landmark Hyde Amendment for 'abortions performed due to the child's conception in rape or incest or to save the life of the mother.'" In the mind of "devout Catholic" Nancy Pelosi, nothing — not even one's deepest, most heartfelt convictions — must be permitted to impede the culture of death.

Photo of Rep. Nancy Pelosi: AP Images



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