



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 14, 2011

First of Major Pro-Life Bills Moves Ahead in House

A major piece of legislation that would effectively end all federal funding of abortion has made a significant step toward passage in the House of Representatives, moving out of the House Judiciary Committee by a vote of 23-14 on March 4.

While pro-life legislation has typically faced a barrage of amendments and competing bills from “pro-choice” lawmakers determined to thwart efforts to end abortion subsidies, [H.R. 3, the “No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act,”](#) sponsored by Representative Chris Smith (pictured, R-N.J.), would change all that by permanently prohibiting the use of taxpayer dollars to pay for abortions.



The [Heritage Foundation](#) noted that besides doing away with the various and sundry conduits that have allowed Planned Parenthood and other abortionists to profit handsomely at the expense of the American taxpayer, the bill would block funding for:

- Elective abortion through appropriations for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- International aid for contraceptive programs where abortion is used as a method of family planning
- Insurance coverage for federal employees that includes elective abortions
- Subsidized abortion with monies congressionally appropriated for the District of Columbia, as well as locally generated tax dollars

Heritage pointed out that the lack of broad-based federal prohibitions led to the inclusion of abortion funding in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), the infamous ObamaCare bill signed by the President last year. “The PPACA includes federal subsidies for health plans offering abortion, a loophole for grant funding for community centers that could provide abortions, and a similar loophole for high-risk insurance pools in the states,” noted a Heritage backgrounder on H.R. 3.

Not only would H.R. 3 permanently close the present abortion funding loopholes that exist in the PPACA, but it would also address the conscience rights of pro-life medical professionals and institutions. “Both the weak conscience protections in the PPACA and the Obama Administration’s recent decision to partially rescind federal conscience regulations have placed the rights of doctors, pharmacists, and hospitals in a precarious situation,” noted the Heritage backgrounder. The new bill would provide “protection from discrimination in federally funded programs to medical professionals and institutions that decline participation in abortion.”

H.R. 3 is one of a trio of pro-life bills that pro-abortion lawmakers and lobbyists have targeted, using, among other strategies, a dishonest media campaign designed to portray the bills as hard-hearted attempts to deny needy women access to healthcare. In a February 12 conference call with an



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assortment of “pro-choice” bloggers, writers, and reporters, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) warned of the “extreme legislation” that was being advanced by anti-abortion legislators in the House. “It’s dangerous to women’s health, disrespects the judgment of American women ... and it’s the most comprehensive and radical assault on women’s health in our lifetime,” Pelosi declared. “It’s that bad.”

In addition to H.R. 3, another bill targeted by Pelosi and company is H.R. 217, the “Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act,” sponsored by Representative Mike Pence (R-Ind.). Taking her talking points from Pelosi’s tutorial, online [“women’s issues” writer Linda Lowen](#) warned her readers that Pence’s bill “would deny federal family-planning funds under Title X to groups that offer abortion access such as Planned Parenthood,” along with eliminating “needed medical services for millions of women who use family planning clinics as their main source of health care.” Lowen noted that according to the “2009 Family Planning Annual Report, in that year alone Title X providers performed 2.2 million Pap tests, 2.3 million breast exams, and over six million tests for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including nearly a million HIV tests.”

But pro-life reporter Ann Shibley, writing on The [John Birch Society](#) website, noted that, to be more accurate, H.R. 17 would serve to defund “the most notorious private for-profit abortion business in the country, Planned Parenthood, by ensuring that taxpayer money for family planning is denied to that organization.” Shibley cautioned that “there are exclusions in the bill for the usual ‘rape or an act of incest against a minor’ and for a ‘woman in danger of death unless an abortion is performed, including a condition caused by or arising from the pregnancy.’ It would not force these conditions on any hospital if said hospital doesn’t provide funds to any entity that performs abortions.”

As for the charge that the bill would strip funds that permit Planned Parenthood to provide crucial medical tests to women, Shibley suggested that the abortion provider could “still provide these tests, for a small fee, or better yet, as a free service they say they are so committed to providing. They can join the ranks of crisis pregnancy centers that provide particular services free of charge as an all-volunteer non-profit agency.”

The third bill that pro-abortion legislators have targeted is H.R. 358, the “Protect Life Act,” sponsored by Representative Joe Pitts (R-Penn.). According to “women’s expert” Lowen, under the bill, “hospitals that receive federal funds but are opposed to abortion can turn away women in need of an emergency abortion to save their lives.” Lowen noted that under a 1986 law, “hospitals that receive Medicare or Medicaid funding must provide emergency care to anyone who walks in their doors, regardless of ability to pay. If they can’t provide the needed care, they must stabilize the patient and transfer them to another hospital that can.” But under H.R. 358, she claimed, “hospitals would be allowed to let a pregnant woman die rather than perform the abortion that would save her life, or refuse to stabilize her and send her to a hospital that will perform abortion.”

The reality of the bill, wrote Shibley, is that it “amends the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act — ObamaCare — by prohibiting federal funds from being to used to cover any part of the cost of any health plan that includes coverage of abortion services....” Shibley noted that the bill would also prohibit discrimination against institutions that refused to perform abortions, “meaning it restores the conscience clause that took a beating in ObamaCare.”

She emphasized that the measure would “in no way leave women in need of medical attention dying in emergency rooms. By restoring the conscience clause for health care facilities and providers, it makes sure they are not discriminated against for declining involvement in abortions. They must and will treat



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patients; if a pregnant woman is the patient, both mother and baby will be treated separately and equally.”

With all three bills facing continued fights in the House, as well as uphill battles in the Senate, Shibler emphasized that Americans who have a commitment to protecting the unborn “[need to contact their Representative and Senators](#) and urge them to vote for H.R. 358, H.R. 217, and H.R. 3. All three of these bills respect and promote the life and health of human beings, especially the pre-born, and prevent the federal government from funding or promoting abortions with taxpayer money.”



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