



# THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC BIOETHICS CENTER

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## Bioethics and Public Policy Report

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**The National Scene:** *Alliance Defending Freedom* has produced two excellent guides to the implications of the violation of religious freedom by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (*HHS "Contraceptive Mandate"*), as it applies to Catholic colleges

(<http://www.cardinalnewmansociety.org/Portals/0/CENTER/IB%20Matt%20Bowman%20Feb%2014%202013%20HHS%20Mandate%20Q%20and%20A.pdf>) and high schools

(<http://www.cardinalnewmansociety.org/Portals/0/CENTER/HRIB%20Matt%20Bowman%20Feb%2014%202013%20HHS%20Mandate%20Q%20and%20A.pdf>). ♦ A grassroots action campaign is being conducted to have

*religious freedom* protections incorporated into pending federal appropriations legislation, as guaranteed under the U.S. constitution, but presently violated by the *HHS Mandate*. To participate see <http://nchla.org/datasource/idocuments/BriefingPageText.2.7.13.pdf>. To have your voice heard go to: <http://nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=292>.

**The State of Conscience/Religious Liberty:** A U.S. District Court judge has overturned *Arizona's Whole Woman's Health Funding Priority Act*, which had defunded Arizona's public expenditures to *Planned Parenthood*, as the largest provider of abortion in the United States.<sup>1</sup> ♦ The *NCBC* has signed onto an *amicus* brief in the case of *Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc. v. Sebelius* and the case of *Autocam Corporation v. Sebelius*, challenging the violation of religious freedom under the *HHS Mandate*.<sup>2</sup> ♦ Also see *Recent Good News*.

**The State of Marriage:** The *Colorado* legislature is advancing a bill to legalize *same-sex civil unions*.<sup>3</sup> ♦ The *Illinois* Senate<sup>4</sup> and the *Rhode Island* House<sup>5</sup> have passed proposed legislation to legalize same-sex marriage in those states. The proposals now go to their respective house/senate. ♦ Also see *Recent Good News*.

**State by State:** A committee of the *New Jersey* Assembly has approved, for full Assembly consideration, a ballot initiative to legalize *physician-assisted suicide* in that state.<sup>6</sup> ♦ *Kansas* has added itself to the states with legislative proposals to legalize *physician-assisted suicide*.<sup>7</sup> ♦ The *Washington State* legislature is considering a bill to require *parental notification* before a minor receives an abortion.<sup>8</sup> At the same time the state is also considering a provision to mandate *abortion coverage* by health care insurers.<sup>9</sup> ♦ The *Arkansas* House passed proposed legislation which would ban abortions after *fetal pain* is experienced (20 weeks).<sup>10</sup> The *Arkansas* Senate defeated proposed legislation to ban abortions after a *fetal heart beat* can be detected.<sup>11</sup> A similar proposal failed in a *Wyoming* House committee.<sup>12</sup> ♦ The *Kentucky* Senate passed proposed legislation to require doctors to offer to show the results of an *ultrasound* to a woman considering an abortion.<sup>13</sup> A similar proposal was defeated in the *Michigan* legislature.<sup>14</sup> ♦ A bill to ban *sex-*

*selection abortions* failed to pass a *Colorado* House committee.<sup>15</sup> ♦ *North Dakota* voters will have the opportunity to vote on a November 2014 ballot initiative to protect human life at all stages of development.<sup>16</sup> ♦ Also see **Recent Good News**. **Recent Good News:** The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago issued an injunction, pending appeal, to *Grote Industries* in its objection to the *HHS Mandate*. The Grote family holds a religious objection to the mandate.<sup>17</sup> ♦ *Arkansas'* Governor Mike Beebe signed into law a ban on abortion coverage in the state health insurance exchange under *ObamaCare*.<sup>18</sup> ♦ The *Montana* Senate rejected a legislative proposal to legalize *physician-assisted suicide*. Earlier, the Montana Supreme Court (*Baxter, et al v. Montana*) had provided a "defense of consent" if a doctor was prosecuted for assisted suicide even though assisted suicide remains a crime in that state.<sup>19</sup> ♦ The *Virginia* House joint resolution, which sought to rescind the constitutional amendment of 2006 protecting *marriage* as between one man and one woman, was defeated.<sup>20</sup> ♦ A proposal for a constitutional amendment ballot initiative, to legalize *same-sex marriage* in *New Mexico*, failed in committee.<sup>21</sup>

**Sharing Your Good News and Your Efforts:** If there are public policy advocacy strategies which you wish to share with others please e-mail [mhilliard@ncbcenter.org](mailto:mhilliard@ncbcenter.org).

**Sharing of Resources:** The web page of the National Catholic Bioethics Center is a significant resource in the realm of bioethics: [www.ncbcenter.org](http://www.ncbcenter.org). Also, bioethicists are on call twenty-four hours a day, every day of the week, for consultation by calling 215-877-2660.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/02/11/court-forces-arizona-to-fund-planned-parenthood-abortion-biz/>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/02/19/hobby-lobby-keeps-fighting-obamas-hhs-mandate-in-court/>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/colorado-gay-civil-union-approved-and-heads-senate-vote310113>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/ill.-catholic-conference-laments-senate-same-sex-marriage-approval/>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.opposingviews.com/i/religion/gay-marriage-bills-advance-2-states#>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/02/10/new-jersey-assembly-committee-oks-bill-to-legalize-assisted-suicide/>.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.kmbz.com/Push-for-legalization-of-physician-assisted-suicid/15519256>.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/02/10/washington-voters-support-parental-involvement-for-teens-on-abortion/>.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ajc.com/ap/ap/financial-services/inslee-leg-must-act-on-abortion-insurance-bill/nWR6n/>.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/02/04/3217040/arkansas-house-oks-abortion-restrictions.html>.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ajc.com/ap/ap/legislative/changed-abortion-bill-fails-ark-house-panel-vote/nWPTY/>.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ajc.com/ap/ap/health/wyoming-committee-votes-down-abortion-bill/nT8tW/>.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/13RS/SB5.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.salon.com/2013/02/06/michigan-lawmakers-push-transvaginal-ultrasound-bill/>.

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci\\_22567931/bills-abortion-religious-freedom-shot-down-by-democrats](http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_22567931/bills-abortion-religious-freedom-shot-down-by-democrats).

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ajc.com/ap/ap/health/nd-senate-oks-bill-regulating-abortion-providers/nWJRZ/>.

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/12/us-usa-healthcare-contraceptives-idUSBRE91B19F20130212?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews&utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FhealthNews+%28Reuters+Health+News%29&utm\\_content=Google+Reader](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/12/us-usa-healthcare-contraceptives-idUSBRE91B19F20130212?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FhealthNews+%28Reuters+Health+News%29&utm_content=Google+Reader).

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ajc.com/news/ap/health/beebe-signs-ban-on-some-abortion-coverage/nWLSg/>.

<sup>19</sup> <http://alexschadenberg.blogspot.ca/2013/02/montana-assisted-suicide-bill-sb-220.html>.

<sup>20</sup> <http://potomaclocal.com/2013/02/15/lawmakers-uphold-gay-marriage-ban/>.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.kob.com/article/stories/S2940018.shtml?cat=500>.