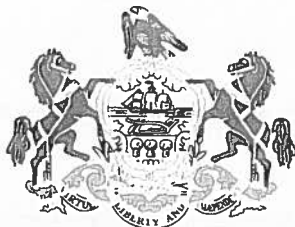


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LIQUOR CONTROL
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 6, 2012

TO: All House Members

FROM: Rep. Tim Krieger *TK*
57th Legislative District

SUBJECT: Introduction of Legislation - Resolution to Encourage Congress to Pass Both the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act of 2011 and Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 2012

On January 20, 2012, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reaffirmed a rule that requires virtually all health plans to cover sterilization, abortion-causing drugs, and contraception. These regulations are being implemented as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA).

This rule will take effect August 1, 2012. Religious employers that do not provide such coverage now, and are technically exempt under the rule's narrow definition of the term "religious employer," will, nevertheless, be required to comply regardless of their fundamental religious beliefs. Some of these employers may cease to exist or be forced to limit their employment and services to only individuals of the exact same religious beliefs.

Since the provision of many of the services covered by the new regulations violate genuine long-held religious convictions, they directly impinge upon one's religious freedom.

Catholic and other denominational hospitals, universities, nursing homes and charities alike will find it impossible to comply with this narrow exemption without compromising their core beliefs. This issue is not a Catholic issue alone. It is an issue which should be of critical importance to anyone who believes that liberty of conscience is at the foundation of our state and nation.

Therefore, I am introducing a resolution memorializing Congress to pass either H.R. 1179 or S. 1467; both of which will create the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act of 2011. My resolution

also calls upon Congress to pass S. 2043, a bill that establishes the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 2012.

The Respect for Rights of Conscience Act provides that a health plan will be considered to have provided essential health benefits and be a qualified healthcare plan under PPACA if it declines to provide specific items or services in cases where those items or services are contrary to the religious beliefs or moral convictions of the purchaser, beneficiary, or entity offering the plan. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 2012 ensures that employers have the opportunity to provide health coverage for their employees that is consistent with their religious beliefs and moral conviction without fear of penalty under the ACA.

If you would like to join me in sponsoring this important legislation, please contact Nancy Shenk via email at nshenk@pahousegop.com or phone my Harrisburg office at 717-260-6146.