

THE RSC GOLDEN TURKEY AWARD

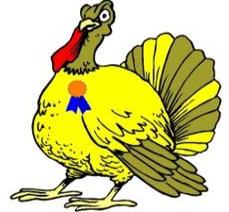
New HHS Decision Tramples Religious Freedom

February 2012



The RSC Golden Turkey Award highlights absurd – though obscure – government regulations. This HHS rule will significantly undermine religious freedom.

IN THIS MONTH'S EDITION: RATHER THAN SUPPORTING THOSE WHO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS FORCING AMERICANS TO CHOOSE BETWEEN VIOLATING THEIR CONSCIENCES AND HELPING THE SICK.



For many years health care providers have enjoyed the freedom to act in the best interest of their patients, in a manner consistent with their deeply held convictions of conscience. According to the terms of Obamacare, healthcare mandates position the federal government to dictate private health care decisions and treatments.

On February 18, 2011, the Obama Administration's Department of Health and Human Services rescinded key portions of a conscience rule issued in 2009 to protect health care providers who exercise their conscience rights. Subsequently, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) issued a recommendation to the Department of Health and Human Services to mandate formerly elective services in health care plans, whether purchasers or plan sponsors agree to pay for them or not. Flowing from this recommendation, the Department of Health and Human Services issued guidelines on August 3, 2011, *imposing mandated coverage of drugs and procedures, including abortifacient contraceptives and devices, along with sterilization*. This directive, finalized on January 20, 2012 with a narrow and inadequate exemption for religious organizations, stands to subject many persons of good will to government-forced ethical dilemmas.

As a result, a wide range of providers, including doctors, nurses, hospitals, insurance plans, and the small businesses that provide health insurance for their employees, would be forced to choose between their convictions and their livelihood, potentially resulting in loss of jobs and significant limitations in access to basic care, especially for vulnerable persons who have long relied on faith-based services.

Rep. Fortenberry introduced H.R. 1179, the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act, which would amend Obamacare to restore fundamental liberties to purchase and extend health care consistent with Hippocratic principles. Rep. Fortenberry counters the disregard held by HHS and for American moral and religious liberty, and we commend him for his efforts. It is fitting that the Department of Health and Human Services should receive the Golden Turkey Award after attempting this outrageous announcement. All RSC Members are encouraged to support and cosponsor H.R. 1179. For more information or to cosponsor, please contact Diana Tasnadi at Diana.Tasnadi@mail.house.gov.

RSC Staff Contact: Rick Eberstadt, Rick.Eberstadt@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9717

For more information about the RSC Golden Turkey Award, visit us at:

<http://RSC.Jordan.House.Gov/GoldenTurkey>