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Catholic group defends Gov. Sebelius record

by NCR Staff

Washington

Catholics United today, a Washington-based Catholic group, announced an initiative intended to educate Catholic leaders and laity on Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius' record.

Sebelius Feb. 28th accepted President Obama's request to become his Health and Human Services secretary, stepping into a central role in the new administration's ambitious effort to overhaul the nation's health care system.

The effort features a Web site ? Catholics for Kathleen Sebelius ? which includes facts about Sebelius' record on issues important to Catholics, and a grassroots petition to demonstrate Catholic support for her nomination.

?Gov. Sebelius is a proven and tireless advocate for children's health care, education, adoption, and support for pregnant women, all components of a public policy agenda intended to benefit the common good. Under her leadership, the state of Kansas has witnessed sharp declines in both abortions and teen pregnancy,? said Chris Korzen, executive director of Catholics United.

?Because of her success in expanding health care coverage and reducing abortions, we feel that Gov. Sebelius is an excellent choice to lead our nation's Department of Health and Human Services.?

Catholics United said it intends to correct smears stemming from right-wing groups against Sebelius by educating Catholics and the media about Sebelius' record of reducing abortions in Kansas by 10 percent during her time as Governor.

According to Catholics United, as Governor, she:

- supported Pregnancy Maintenance Initiatives, which are pro-life programs run through agencies such as Catholic Charities that provide pregnant women with alternatives to abortion;
- signed Alexa's Law, to deal with certain crimes against unborn children, defined as meaning a fetus at any state of gestation from fertilization to birth. As a result, if a pregnant woman was murdered, the offender could be charged with the murder of the unborn child as well;
- signed a law doubling the adoption tax credit and oversaw an expansion of adoption support spending in Kansas from \$17,566,288 in 2003 to a projected \$23,279,623 in 2008; and
- oversaw a decline in teen pregnancies between 2002 and 2007.

"Our nation desperately needs leaders who can bring Americans together behind common ground, common good solutions to the problems of our day," said Korzen. "Kathleen Sebelius' ability to lead as a popular Democrat in a very conservative state proves she is the right woman for the job. We call on all people of good will to support her nomination and we look forward to her service in this important position."

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