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Bishops pitch for health care reform

by Dennis Coday

NCR Today

The media relations office for the U.S. bishops just tweeted this:

U.S. bishops have launched Web page promoting health care reform: <http://www.usccb.org/healthcare>

Do you think that was in response to my last blog entry (The Tablet: U.S. bishops risk losing the moment) which went up just minutes before? Here's the media release that goes with the Web page launch:

U.S. Bishops Launch Web Site on Health Care Reform, Their Position and Concerns

WASHINGTON -- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) launched a Web page promoting its support of "truly universal health policy with respect for human life and dignity." The page, www.usccb.org/healthcare, includes letters from bishops to Congress, videos, facts and statistics, frequently asked questions, and links for contacting members of Congress.

Letters to Congress include an August 11 letter by Cardinal Justin Rigali, the bishops' Pro-Life chairman, criticizing abortion provisions in the House version of health care legislation and a July 17 letter from Bishop William Murphy, the bishops' Domestic Social Justice chairman, outlining the bishops' concerns and priorities for health care reform as a whole.

The site will feature Web videos of USCCB policy staff discussing the bishops' position on health care. Kathy Saile, director of Domestic Social Development, outlines the general position and concerns. Richard Doerflinger, associate director of Pro-Life Activities, describes how abortion relates to the health care reform debate.

The page also contains facts and statistics about Catholic health care in the United States, which

includes 624 Catholic hospitals, 164 home health agencies, and 41 hospice organizations.

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