

Democrats ready to make further abortion concessions

Thomas C. Fox | Nov. 4, 2009 NCR Today

The pressure by abortion opponents appears to be paying off as [House Democratic leaders signaled](#) [1] that they were prepared to make further changes to their health care bill.

Generally speaking, Democrats had argued that the health care legislation would make no change to existing federal laws regarding how tax dollars could be used to pay for abortions.

The Hyde Amendment, adopted in 1976, bars the government from covering abortion through Medicaid, the state-federal insurance program for the poor. Under existing law, federal dollars typically can be used for abortions only in cases of rape or incest or when a pregnant woman's life is endangered by illness, injury or other physical disorder.

Abortion opponents, including the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, had faulted the health care legislation segregated-funds idea as an accounting gimmick that would do little to deter insurers receiving federal payments from covering abortion.

Now further efforts to restrict abortion funding, while complicated, appear to be coming.

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[1] <http://prescriptions.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/03/democrats-near-deal-on-abortion-coverage/>