

## Catholics United Backs Senate Bill

Michael Sean Winters | Dec. 23, 2009 NCR Today

A prominent progressive Catholic group, Catholics United, has announced its endorsement of the Senate health care reform bill. Like many supporters of health care reform, our members are clearly disappointed with the Senate's failure to include a public option, expand Medicare coverage, or do enough to improve the general affordability of health insurance for low- and middle-income families, said Chris Korzen, executive director of Catholics United. We support final passage of the Senate bill, but call on negotiators from both houses of Congress to address these deficiencies in conference negotiations.

Catholics United polled its membership before giving its endorsement. More than 71 percent of the 4,356 people participating in the poll indicated that they want the Senate measure to proceed although the same percentage expressed the fear that the Senate bill does not go far enough to cover the uninsured.

Catholics United also polled on the issue of abortion coverage. 31 percent agreed with the provisions of the Senate bill that govern abortion coverage in the reforms, while 48 percent said they thought the provisions were too restrictive. As I blogged yesterday, I think the Senate language on abortion is actually more restrictive than the Stupak Amendment that the USCCB has endorsed, which is why I would not count myself among that 48 percent in the Catholics United survey. But, the numbers are a snapshot of where many progressive Catholics are: They have fought for universal health insurance for a long time and they do not want any issue, even one as important as abortion, getting in the way of final passage.

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