

Cong. Kildee Defends Decision to Support Health Care Bill

Michael Sean Winters | Mar. 18, 2010 NCR Today

Congressman Dale Kildee, a lifelong pro-life Democrat from Michigan, gave an impassioned defense of his decision to support the final health care bill pending before Congress on a conference call with reporters sponsored by the progressive group Faith in Public Life. "I have always been pro-life," Kildee said. "I am going to be eighty-one in September and at this stage in my life, I am not going to change my position on abortion and risk my eternal salvation. I am absolutely convinced that the original intent of the Hyde Amendment is in the Senate bill."

Kildee supported the Stupak Amendment when it was voted on in the House of Representatives in November. That Amendment failed in the Senate. Kildee noted that the entire health care bill is pro-life insofar as it will help provide coverage to those who currently lack it. "I am a pro-life member of Congress, both the unborn and the born," Kildee said.

Sister Simone Campbell also spoke on the call. She explained that the letter signed by the heads of more than 60 religious orders of women in support of health care reform came about Sunday after she read the statement from Daughter of Charity, Sister Carol Keehan, who is President of the Catholic Health Association. The letter intended to demonstrate solidarity with the CHA position. "I then was amazed because it was a quick turnaround, we need a response by Tuesday, and I started getting responses immediately. We wanted to stand with CHA and make a positive statement for life." Sister Campbell said that the sisters have a wealth of experience dealing with health care and the needs of the poor. "It is out of this experience of people with enormous need, that catholic sisters signed on to this letter with their support."

Congressman Charlie Wilson of Ohio also defended his pro-life credentials and his intention to support the bill. "I think the language of the Senate bill clearly ensures there will be no federal funding of abortion," Wilson said. He also cited the situation of those who die from a lack of health care. "I am a pro-life Catholic."

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