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HHS Statement on New Conscience Regs

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Distinctly Catholic

Here is the statement issued by the Department of Health and Human Services announcing the new conscience regulations:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, February 18, 2011

Contact: HHS Press Office
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Statement from the Department of Health and Human Services on the Regulation for the Enforcement of Federal Health Care Conscience Protections

The administration strongly supports provider conscience laws that protect and support the rights of health care providers, and also recognizes and supports the rights of patients. Strong conscience laws make it clear that health care providers cannot be compelled to perform or assist in an abortion. Many of these strong conscience laws have been in existence for more than 30 years. The rule being issued today builds on these laws by providing a clear enforcement process.

To underscore its support, HHS is beginning a new awareness initiative for our grantees through the HHS Office for Civil Rights, to ensure they understand the statutory conscience protections, and the enforcement process for those who believe their rights have been violated.

The final conscience protection rule being issued today by HHS reaffirms the Department's commitment to longstanding federal conscience statutes by maintaining and building upon provisions of the Bush

administration rule that established an enforcement process for federal conscience laws, while rescinding the definitions and terms of the previous rule that caused confusion and could be taken as overly broad.

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