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Catholics pleased with HHS Plan B decision

by Dennis Coday

NCR Today

Yesterday, Catholic News Service Reported: The U.S. bishops' pro-life spokeswoman said she was relieved that the Obama administration has decided not to allow the Plan B One-Step "morning-after pill" to be sold without a prescription to those under 17. (**Read more.**)

The Catholic Health Association is also applauding the decision. The CHA released the following statement this morning:

CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION APPLAUDS HHS DECISION ON PLAN B

WASHINGTON, DC (December 9, 2011) ? Sister Carol Keehan, DC, president and chief executive officer of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), issued the following statement.

The Catholic Health Association is very grateful to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius for her intelligent and courageous decision to prevent very young adolescents from purchasing and administering unsupervised the strong hormone contained in the drug known as Plan B.

There is grave concern about the safety of very young adolescents self-administering this hormone at such a critical time in their growth cycle. This is not a case of politics versus science. There is no strong science that definitively establishes the safety of this drug when self-administered by 11- and 13-year olds.

CHA has great respect for the FDA, but there are no significant studies in 11 to 13-year olds over a long period of time that have demonstrated the safety of this very significant drug. We do not want to learn in 10 to 20 years about this drug what we now know about hormone replacement therapy and its connection to breast cancer. In addition, there are no long term studies that demonstrate the

drug's potential impact on future reproductive choices these young girls will make.

Our country must help parents exercise their responsibility to their children. Giving parents control over relatively inconsequential areas such as ear-piercing and then taking it away in such a serious area would not only put their children at risk but undermine parents' ability to parent. This great country is built on the strength of the family and this decision helps to maintain a strong role for parents in critical decisions.

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