Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

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PRESBYTERIANS AFFIRMING REPRODUCTIVE OPTIONS

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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM
WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM, THE FEDERATION OF TEMPLE SISTERHOODS
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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMEN'S FEDERATION
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YWCA OF THE USA

Statement of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice on HR 3, "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act" and HR 358, "Protect Life Act"

US House of Representatives
Committee on Ways & Means
Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures

March 16, 2011

As clergy and leaders of religious communities from a wide range of faith traditions, we are united in moral outrage at the attempt to drastically limit access to reproductive health care through the "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act" (HR 3, introduced by Representative Chris Smith) and the "Protect Life Act" (HR 358, introduced by Representative Joe Pitts). These bills are an attack on the respect and reverence for human dignity that is at the core of so many of our faith traditions. On behalf of people of faith across the nation, we call on you to stand against HR 3 and HR 358.

Current law allows federal funding for abortion for a woman who becomes pregnant as the result of rape, incest or in the case of life endangerment. These bills tried to further narrow the current exception of rape to "forcible" rape, which would prevent many rape survivors from accessing abortion coverage, including survivors of statutory rape and many forms of date rape. Furthermore, these bills could allow public hospitals to refuse to treat pregnant women in emergencies, even when their health or life was in danger. HR 3 would severely limit ALL women's access to reproductive health care, regardless of if they are covered by Medicaid or private insurance. Finally, it would violate the hallowed promise of our nation to respect diverse religious views, in this case on the appropriateness of abortion.

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We believe HR 3 and HR 358 would violate the trust that women and men have placed in the law, to protect their access to health services.

We are united in a shared reverence of the sacredness of compassion. Women who have survived rape or incest deserve health care services, including abortion, even if they don't have the means to pay for it. Women whose lives are threatened deserve appropriate health care and to not be turned away from a hospital. Vulnerable women who cannot afford health insurance deserve comprehensive care. They deserve compassion; they deserve justice. Women and their families deserve better than this.

As clergy and leaders of faith communities, we call on Congress to ***stand in their defense and against these dangerous and misleading bills.***

Peace and blessings,

Reverend Carlton W. Veazey
President and CEO, Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

INDIVIDUALS

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Rabbi Dennis Linson	Irvine	CA
Rabbi Steven B. Jacobs	Los Angeles	CA
Rabbi Morris L. Rubinstein	Sun Valley	CA
Rabbi Josh Berkenwald	San Jose	CA
Rabbi Gail Labovitz	Los Angeles	CA
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Rev. Nicole M. Lamarche	Hayward	CA
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Anna Korn	Berkeley	CA
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