



**National Committee for a Human Life Amendment, Inc.**

DATE: August 18, 2014

TO: Diocesan Pro-Life Directors, State Catholic Conference Directors, Friends

FROM: Michael Taylor, Executive Director

RE: **Recess Follow-up Recommendations**

Recently the U.S. Senate voted on a bill called the "Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act" (S. 2578). The vote failed by a narrow margin. Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) preserved the right to have the Senate take up this measure again.

Introduced in reaction against the Supreme Court's carefully written *Hobby Lobby* decision, S. 2578 represents a broad attack on conscience rights and religious freedom.

**Summer Recess: Special Opportunities**

Congress is now in its summer recess, returning September 8. Senators are present in their home states. *Please use this opportunity for additional follow-up contacts, especially to Senators who have expressed support for S. 2578.* Thank Senators who opposed S. 2578, and urge those who supported the bill to reconsider their position. All Senators should be urged to vote against any future motion to advance or approve S. 2578.

Parishes

Please urge your people in the parishes to make a special effort to contact their Senators. To assist people-in-the-pews, NCHLA has an online Action Alert with suggested follow-up actions. See: [nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=311](http://nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=311). Suggestions include:

- Send e-mails through NCHLA's Action Center.
- Contact Senators by phone.
- Send letters-to-the-editor to local papers.
- Attend town meetings. Informally meet Senators at county fairs or other such public events.
- Participate in TV and radio call-in shows.

Leadership

Please consider arranging meetings with Senators in their local offices. Participants in these meetings could include bishops, state Catholic conference staff, Diocesan pro-life staff, and prominent local constituents.

Also please consider placing op-ed pieces in local papers.

## Resources

- Policy Letter-Expresses "strong opposition" to S. 2578, sent to U.S. Senate by Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, Chairman of the Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, and Seán Cardinal O'Malley of Boston, Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities. See: [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/upload/07-14-14-S-2578-Cardinal-O-Malley-Archbishop-Lori-to-Senate.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/upload/07-14-14-S-2578-Cardinal-O-Malley-Archbishop-Lori-to-Senate.pdf).
- Fact Sheet-Analyzes S. 2578 as a measure "potentially attacking *all* federal laws protecting conscience rights." See: [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/conscience-protection/upload/S-2578-Backgrounder.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/conscience-protection/upload/S-2578-Backgrounder.pdf).

## The Vote was Close

Because it was a cloture motion requiring 60 votes, the Senate vote on S. 2578 failed on a 56-yes, 43-no vote. *But the vote was even closer than it seems.* In fact, 58 Senators would support the motion to proceed. The only absent Senator is a co-sponsor of the bill. And Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), also a co-sponsor, had voted "Yes" but switched to "No" before the vote was called. This was a procedural move, giving him a right to ask for the vote to be reconsidered at a later time.

Thanks for all you do in support of life!