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Another Poll on Abortion-Funding in Health Care

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 19, 2009 NCR Today

Another poll, this one by CNN [1], says that 61% of Americans do not want federal funding of abortion coverage in the health care reform bill. 37% said that they do support such funding.

These findings, combined with those from the polls cited below, should stiffen the resolve of centrist Democrats ? and the White House ? to keep the Stupak Amendment largely in tact. These numbers come in spite of the disinformation campaign of the past two weeks conducted by the pro-choice forces which made it seem that Stupak would thrust Western civilization back into the dark ages.

Most Democrats are pro-choice. So, that 37% who support federal funding is almost all Democrats. That means that most of the 61% who oppose federal funding of abortion are not Democrats. Some of that 61% will not vote for Obama no matter what he does, but very few of the 37% will jump ship if he leaves the Stupak Amendment in tact. In short, if the administration is looking for a way to appeal to centrist, moderate voters, they should be putting pressure on Congress to keep Stupak, or almost all of it.

One of the things you find when you live in the estuary between politics and religion is that you have to keep reminding those who are all in the fresh water or the salt, that things look different from the other side. I always tell my clerical friends, ?Yes, but they are politicians, not priests? and I always have to remind my political friends, ?They are bishops not politicians.? But, the CNN numbers not only confirm the bishops? stance in favor of pro-life health care reform, it confirms whatever political instinct led then-candidate Barack Obama to give a primetime speaking slot to Sen. Bob Casey at last year?s Democratic National Convention. Following such instincts resulted in Obama achieving a 14-point swing among Catholic voters above what John Kerry polled in 2004. It would be a shame if pressure from the pro-choice crowd were to force him to play to his base on this issue. He should stay in the center and insist on no federal funding for abortion.

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Links:
[1] http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2009/11/18/cnn-poll-majority-favor-abortion-funding-ban-in-health-care-bill/