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Rachel Maddow excoriates Stupak amendment

Thomas C. Fox | Mar. 11, 2010 NCR Today

By now most NCR readers have heard the arguments -- pro and con -- regarding the Stupak Amendment, embedded in the House passed version of the health care bill.

Rep. Bart Stupak (D-Michigan) says he represents a coalition of 12 anti-choice Democrats who will vote against health care reform unless their anti-abortion language remains in the final health care bill. The original House health care bill only passed by 5 votes, so a 12-vote bloc could be a real obstacle to final passage.

Stupak objects to the current Senate health care bill because, he says, it would fund abortions. This, however, depends on one's vantage point, especially because the Senate bill specificially states that government money can go to fund abortions.

Under proposed Senate health reform, government subsidies would only be allowed to cover a portion of monthly premiums, with consumers making up the difference out of pocket. The Senate bill would ensure that abortion coverage could only come out of out-of-pocket dollars, not from the subsidy.

Stupak and others, including the U.S. bishops, counter saying that that every dollar the government spends on "not-abortion"-insurance is one more dollar the individual has to spend on abortion coverage.

Last night, on the MSNBC's Rachel Maddow show, the show's articulate host excoriated Stupak and the Stupak logic [1], arguing that if you took his logic to its conclusion then almost all government spending turns out to be an abortion subsidy. Food stamps, she argued, can be viewed as subsidizing abortion because every dollar the government spends on food is another dollar to use for abortion, etc.

She then went on to ask questions regarding housing subsidies Stupack has been receiving during the past seven years, strongly implying he has violated congressional ethics rules.

Regardless of your thoughts on the Stupak amendment, the broadcast was a powerful one and one worth noting.

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[1] http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/26315908/vp/35807173#35807173