



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES-TEXAS

The Issue

Increasingly, Catholic health care providers have been challenged for not offering certain "reproductive health services" (e.g., abortion, 'in vitro' fertilization). A variety of groups have orchestrated campaigns questioning whether Catholic health care providers have the right to limit the provision of such services. These efforts include proposed legislation, litigation and public relations campaigns. These tactics are designed to require or persuade Catholic health care providers to offer services that conflict with their moral teachings or prevent affiliations between Catholic and non-Catholic entities.

Several states have enacted legislation that could result in Catholic hospitals closing or substantially reducing services to the communities.

In other states and for certain federal programs (e.g., Medicare Choice, Federal Employees Health Benefits Program) Catholic providers have been able to secure a "conscience clause" protecting their right to offer services of their choice. □

In some instances, however, conscience clauses are inadequate.

The CHRISTUS Health Position: Provide adequate legal protections for Catholic health providers to offer health care services that are consistent with our moral teachings.

In an effort to promote the positive contributions of the ministry, CHRISTUS Health has paralleled much of the work of the Catholic Health Association (CHA) to communicate a positive image that promotes the value of Catholic health care.

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