



National Catholic Student Coalition

45 Lovett Avenue † Newark, DE 19711
www.catholicstudent.org † ncsc@catholicstudent.org

NCSC/RES/2010[1]

RESOLUTION – Freedom of Choice Act

Whereas, the National Catholic Student Coalition is committed to participating actively in the Roman Catholic Church and representing Catholic students in the United States in national and international forums.

Whereas, the National Catholic Student Coalition is committed to the social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church which affirms the dignity of human life from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death.

The National Catholic Student Coalition,

Recognizing that two versions of the Freedom of Choice Act [FOCA] were introduced in the Senate (S.1173, 2007) and House of Representatives (H.R. 1964, 2007) of the United States 110th Congress – 1st Session;

Recognizing that the Act's policy is "to protect, consistent with Roe v. Wade, a woman's freedom to choose to bear a child or terminate a pregnancy, and for other purposes";

Outlining the key provisions and line of directives specified by the Act as found on Section 4 of the Act (S.1173, 2007):

INTERFERENCE WITH REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROHIBITED - The overarching details specified under this section includes a declaration that

[a] "It is the policy of the United States that every woman has the fundamental right to choose to bear a child, to terminate a pregnancy prior to fetal viability, or to terminate a pregnancy after fetal viability when necessary to protect the life of the woman" (S.1173, 2007).¹

[b] Prohibition of Interference – "A government may not [1] deny or interfere with a woman's right to choose ... or discriminate against the exercise of the rights set forth in the [preceding] paragraph [1] in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information" (S.1173, 2007).¹

Finally, the act calls for [c] Civil action – An individual aggrieved by a violation of this section may obtain appropriate relief (including relief against a government) in a civil action (S.1173, 2007).¹;

Acknowledging the need for discussion on women health services, especially as it relates to the reproductive health services to women which is the focus of this act.



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The NCSC, in recognizing the need for civil discourse on reproductive health issues,

Affirms that reproductive health services must be respectful of the right to life and that no legislation should downgrade the right to life in order to further the right of a woman to choose;

Espouses the reflection of Pope Benedict XVI that “[L]ife is the first good received from God and is fundamental to all others; to guarantee the right to life for all and in an equal manner for all is the duty upon which the future of humanity depends”²;

Recognizes that a right exists in so far as it does not threaten another individual’s right to life;

Finds the declaration – “**it is the policy of the United States that every woman has the fundamental right to choose to bear a child, to terminate a pregnancy prior to fetal viability, or to terminate a pregnancy after fetal viability when necessary to protect the life of the woman**” – problematic, as it preempts public discourse on the issue of abortion and errantly assumes unanimous conclusion of public support for the Act.

Be it resolved that:

The National Catholic Student Coalition calls for a legislative review of the Freedom of Choice Act to ensure that the Act - through insertion of unambiguous language and semantics - recognizes the rights of the unborn to life.

The NCSC firmly advocates for basic human rights, which includes a right to life at all stages of human development.

The NCSC recognizes that it is the duty of the government to work for the common good in a society, working to protect the inalienable rights of the voiceless, under-represented, and less privileged members of the society.

Be it resolved that the NCSC unites its voice with the Catholic Church in calling for legislations and policies that uphold the dignity of human life from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death, citing that all inherent rights of the human being rest on the primordial respect of the rights of the unborn.

This resolution was drafted in a specific historical and political climate, and as such, the particular political details of this resolution may pass in and out of applicability. However, the core issue addressed by this resolution remains the same – that we, the members of the NCSC, call for the prohibition of the use of government funds in support of abortion in all current and future legislation to which the message of this resolution applies.



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Actions:

The NCSC empowers its constituent Catholic student body to contact their representatives, with the [addendum] to the Resolution on the Freedom of Choice Act, expressing the concerns of the NCSC with the primary premise that the piece of legislation on the FOCA must recognize the right of the unborn to life, and that all rights – including the rights of the woman to choose – must rest on the primordial recognition of the right of the unborn to life.

The NCSC urges its constituent student body to reflect deeply and prayerfully on the FOCA with the understanding that laws do exist to bring about order in our society, protect the common good of the society with a special role in defending the rights of the underprivileged and underrepresented members of the society.

Sponsored by: Ifeanyi Onor, 2009 NCSC International Relations Committee Chairperson

Reviewers: Steve Colaco, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University; Fr. Jeffery Ott O.P., Xavier University of Louisiana; Lauren Joyce, The Catholic University of America; & Jeff Schaffer, Lock Haven University.

Presented and accepted by the NCSC at the 26th annual leadership conference, in Malvern, PA January 2010.

[1] Freedom of Choice Act, S.1173, 110th Congress, 1st Session (2007).

[2] Pope Benedict XVI (2007). Address to the Participants in the General Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life. Retrieved from <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/tdocs/popebquotes2008.shtml>