



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Statement of Bishop Hurley on the Health Insurance Mandate:

The recent decision to uphold the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) insurance ruling is a great disappointment. The HHS ruling mandates religious people and institutions to act in violation of their consciences in providing certain health care benefits (contraception, sterilization and abortifacients) as part of health care plans offered to employees of Catholic agencies and institutions which serve the church and community.

The implications of this mandate raise serious questions about the ability of our Catholic institutions of health care, charities and education to carry out their mission in accord with Catholic teaching and individual conscience. The full implications are not clear and will require careful study and action by legal and moral scholars.

This directive is another expression of a serious threat to religious liberty and conscience and erodes our right to exercise religion in our society.

As a federal issue, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is committed to use every legal means possible and take leadership to prevent the implementation of this mandate in our Catholic agencies and institutions.

I ask for your prayers that our rights as a Catholic community and others who share our views will be respected and honored.

Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley
Bishop of Grand Rapids
January 23, 2012

For additional information: Log onto the websites for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) www.usccb.org or the Diocese of Grand Rapids www.dioceseofgrandrapids.org

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