

## Resolution on Religious Restrictions in Health Care Mergers

1 **WHEREAS** The *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, Fifth Edition, 2009*,  
2 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, is a 43-page document, hereafter referred to as  
3 The Directives; and

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5 **WHEREAS** the Directives have been incorporated into many Washington state agreements  
6 forming associations (e.g. alliances, partnerships, mergers) of Catholic health care facilities with  
7 non-sectarian, non-profit health care facilities, such as Providence with Swedish; and

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9 **WHEREAS** some of The Directives most flagrantly in conflict with public policy and non-  
10 sectarian health care provisions can be summed up as follows (see [catholicwatch.org](http://catholicwatch.org)):

11 **Forbidden** • contraception • vasectomies and tubal ligation • abortion under any  
12 circumstances, including an ectopic pregnancy, a life-threatening condition • most fertility  
13 treatments • In Vitro Fertilization • new treatments (e.g., for Parkinsons or Juvenile Diabetes)  
14 using embryonic stem cells • any participation or referrals for patients who want to exercise  
15 their legal rights under Death with Dignity laws • recognition of LGBT rights

16 **Required** • tube feeding in the case of persistent, vegetative coma (similar to Terri Schiavo),  
17 regardless of any Advance Directive to the contrary • employees to override patients'  
18 Advanced Directives if they conflict with the Bishops' Moral code • adherence to all of The  
19 Directives by all employees associated with a Catholic hospital

20 **Asserted** • employees are to override patients' Advanced Directives if they conflict with the  
21 Bishops' Moral code • adherence to all of The Directives by all employees associated with a  
22 Catholic hospital ; and

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24 **WHEREAS** medical facilities are run substantially on public dollars; and

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26 **WHEREAS** the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution prohibits government support of any  
27 religion, and all health care groups that incorporate The Directives violate this prohibition and  
28 further violate the freedom of religion of those who do not subscribe to The Directives;

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30 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that upon adoption of this resolution we, the Washington  
31 State Democrats, ask the Attorney General of the State of Washington to undertake a thorough  
32 review and audit of the terms of all health care associations, however characterized, between  
33 non-sectarian and sectarian providers in Washington State to determine in particular whether  
34 these associations (a) extend the authority of religious doctrine, such as the Catholic "Ethical  
35 and Religious Directives", so as to prevent, restrict, or make more difficult the freedom of choice  
36 of the allied non-sectarian health care facilities, providers and patients; and/or (b) result in  
37 otherwise prohibited direct or indirect state funding of religion; and

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39 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that we, the Washington State Democrats, ask our  
40 state legislators to take legislative action to prevent sectarian religious doctrine from applying to  
41 the facilities, providers, staff or patients of non-sectarian health care organizations even if they  
42 are associated, allied or merged with a sectarian religious organization.

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48 The Progressive Caucus voted in support of this resolution on 4/27/2013 in Chelan.

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50 Recommended "pass with amendments" by the Resolutions Committee at the April 27, 2013 meeting in  
51 Chelan.

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53 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its April 27, 2013 meeting in Chelan.

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