



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Government Relations

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3140 • FAX 202-541-3313
EMAIL: OGR@USCCB.ORG • WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/OGR

February 27, 2013

Dear Representative:

While there is much to be commended in the Senate-passed version of S. 47, the “Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013”, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has serious concerns about several of its provisions, and those concerns make us unable to support it.

Among the concerns we have about the Senate-passed version of S. 47 are its antidiscrimination provisions, which contain problematic language and which could have the unintended consequence of restricting the free exercise of religious organizations in hiring, and the lack of conscience protection for contractors seeking to further their religious mission by assisting victims of human trafficking.

The USCCB firmly believes in protecting the well-being and safety of all people from violence, especially from violence in the home, and believes the existing VAWA law is adequate in doing that. We acknowledge that the House Substitute to the Senate-passed version of S. 47 is a less than perfect solution, as well. However, we urge Members to support the House substitute, which would give Congress an opportunity to correct some of the flaws in the Senate-passed version of S. 47 before that measure is sent to the President for his consideration.

Sincerely

Jayd Henricks
Director, Office of Government Relations