

BISHOP GUILLORY JOINS RENEWED PLEA TO REPAIR ACA

SUPREME COURT DECISION DOES NOT ADDRESS FUNDAMENTAL FLAWS IN THE LAW

“The Supreme Court’s decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act (ACA) makes it now even more imperative for Congress and the Administration to fix the law in regard to abortion funding, conscience protection and immigrants’ access to health care,” said Bishop Curtis Guillory, S.V.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Beaumont.

Bishop Guillory’s words came in reaction to the high court’s decision and as he joined his brother bishops in renewing their plea to have the law fixed on those three issues.

The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the “individual mandate” of the health reform as an acceptable exercise of Congress’ taxing power.

“For nearly a century, U.S. Catholic bishops have been and will continue to be advocates for comprehensive health care reform to ensure access to life-affirming care for everyone especially the poor and the vulnerable. However, I and my brother bishops have made our position on the law very clear in regard to the way it deals with abortion funding, conscience protection and immigrant access,” said Bishop Guillory.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has never joined in efforts to repeal the law in its entirety. The bishops have called and are renewing their plea to have the law “fixed” in three ways.

First, ACA allows use of federal funds to pay for elective abortions and for plans that cover such abortions, contradicting longstanding federal policy. Second, the Act fails to include necessary language to provide essential conscience protection, both within and beyond the abortion context. Third, ACA fails to treat immigrant workers and their families fairly. The bishops are concerned the ACA leaves immigrants worse off by not allowing them to purchase health coverage in the new exchanges created under the law, even if they use their own money.

“In his statement today, the President said he hopes to continue improving the law. My plea is that he and Congress work to fix the fundamentally flawed aspects of this health care reform. And during this time I ask our faithful to pray for our congressional leaders and our administration that they see the need for life-affirming health care for all and also recognize the God given right of religious freedom –a freedom that has been endangered by the part of the health care law that would require religious and other employers to violate their belief systems and their consciences,” said Bishop Guillory.