

ON WATCH IN WASHINGTON

Intercessors for America's PRAYER ALERT

March 23, 2011

Health Care

STATES OFF THE HOOK?

President Obama announced support for legislation that would let states opt out of the health law earlier than planned. If such a measure passed, the nation's governors would still be forced to deliver on the law's goals. And that's why congressional Republicans don't see Obama's remarks to the National Governor's Association as progress. They don't see any change: The states would be implementing a law that GOP governors and lawmakers insist is a federal takeover of the health care system.

Obama told the governors, who were in Washington for their winter meeting, that he backs a "reasonable" bill (S 248) sponsored by Democratic Sens. Ron Wyden of Oregon and Mary L. Landrieu of Louisiana and Republican Sen. Scott P. Brown of Massachusetts. The measure would allow states to seek waivers from the law sooner than 2017, which is now the earliest date under which they can set up systems different from the federal approach. The waivers would be in effect for five years and could be renewed. (Congress.org)

Thank God for the leadership of our states, and for room to see widespread discontent with the new health care law. Ask God to guard the steps of state leaders so that they will not walk into traps. May He lead us to clearly see, define, and trust Him, even still, in how to address the system's problems. May the cure not be more deadly than the disease.

"I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." (Psalm 55:8)

Marriage / Family

96 HOUSE MEMBERS DEFEND MARRIAGE

Last week, Speaker John Boehner directed the House General Counsel to defend the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act in court after Barack Obama ordered his Justice Department to stop defending traditional marriage. President Obama has recently concluded that commonsense laws defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman are unconstitutional and amount to bigotry.

While I am pleased with Speaker Boehner's action, I think it is important for voters to know where their elected representatives stand on this issue. Thanks to freshman Rep. Vicky Hartzler (R-MO), we may soon learn whether members of Congress agree with Barack Obama or the voters of 31 states who have protected the meaning of traditional marriage at the ballot box.

Rep. Hartzler recently introduced a resolution condemning the Obama Administration for its failure to defend the law upholding traditional marriage in America. In the past week, 96 members have signed on as co-sponsors. Here's more encouraging news: For all the talk about how the Tea Party candidates

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cared only about fiscal issues, nearly half of the co-sponsors (41) are freshmen. I'm sure more will sign on in the days ahead. (Gary Bauer)

Thank God for providing a way to defend this law. Pray that God would go before it and make the way straight to honor and preserve this sacred institution. Pray that He would also make it clear who is for, and who is not for, preserving traditional marriage.

"This is what the LORD says: 'Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.'" (Jeremiah 6:16)

State / Federal Government

ARIZONA SEEKING PACTS WITH OTHER STATES TO DEFY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Arizona lawmakers are working to create alliances with other states on controversial issues such as health care, immigration and firearms regulation in a growing effort to challenge the authority of the federal government. The push to form interstate compacts, which have the power to supersede existing federal law if approved by Congress, is part of a broader effort at the Arizona Capitol to promote states' rights.

Lawmakers have introduced bills that seek to limit congressional spending and federal authority on issues from elections to environmental inspections, and Gov. Jan Brewer lists federalism as one of her top priority initiatives this term. Even if the House and Senate pass the measures and the governor signs them, Congress would still have to approve them - and other states would have to pass similar legislation. Critics question the point of the bills and the motivation of the lawmakers promoting them.

"Right now, Arizona is the epicenter for a lot of - and I am trying to be neutral here - innovative strategies for voicing displeasure with federal law," said Greg Magarian, a constitutional - law expert at Washington University in St. Louis. "I have to believe the primary motivation here is political. You pass this and then essentially dare Congress to invalidate it." (The Arizona Republic) Read [more](#)

With complex issues at so many levels, pray for leadership at the federal level, and not just news cycle highlights. Intercede that leaders would be mindful of the difference between states' rights and creating a new subset of federalism. Ask the LORD to complete the work He has done and to guard the nation against pitfalls.

"He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

Sharia / Foreign Law

IS THE CONSTITUTION COMPLIANT WITH SHARIA?

A proponent of the "Ground Zero Mega-Mosque," [Imam Feisal Rauf](#), is [on a tour of American universities](#) telling youth that Sharia is not only compatible with the Constitution, but that the Constitution is "Sharia compliant." What is his purpose? He says that since the Constitution is compatible with Sharia then there is no need to fear Sharia law. A recent post at [BigPeace.com](#) disagrees, highlighting the incompatibilities in an article titled [Sharia for Dummies](#). The article states that Sharia law prescribes death for homosexuality and virtually no rights for women.

Intercede for wisdom for our university leaders. Ask God to give them a higher understanding of their national purpose, and for the Lord to remove blinders and shield students and faculty from distortion of truth. Pray that God would raise up people who know and will speak for the part that He played in our nation's founding. May our Constitution even today glorify God. Pray for Imam Feisal Rauf to seek Truth and to realize (and consider carefully) the weight and influence that his

words may carry in the halls of academia. Pray that Feisal and University faculty members would be “overcome” by the Word of the Lord and His revelation (Jer. 23:9).

“Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come!” (Matthew 18:7)

CONGRESSMEN CALL FOR RESOLUTION ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ) and Congressman Heath Shuler (D-NC), co-chairs of the Congressional International Religious Freedom Caucus, introduced a resolution calling for the U.S. to take action to protect religious freedom. The resolution condemns the intolerance that sanctioned recent high profile assassinations in Pakistan including that of Minister of Minority Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti.

Tina Ramirez, Director of Government Relations at the Becket Fund, who collaborated with Congressman Franks' office on House Resolution 141 said, "Congress is finally recognizing the dangerous nexus between Pakistan's blasphemy laws and international advocacy for 'defamation' resolutions that defend the harmful effects of those laws on innocent lives. It is inexcusable that the international community has allowed these deaths to occur instead of standing behind the men who were willing to die for the freedom their country and the UN system was intended to protect." (Religious Freedom Coalition)

Thank God for Trent Franks and Heath Shuler, who are willing to publicly stand up for freedom to proclaim God’s name, and the freedom of religion. Give thanks for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and particularly its points on freedom of religion. May the House of Representatives pass House Resolution 141.

“You shall have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

BILL OPPOSING USE OF FOREIGN LAW IN USA

Congressman Sandy Adams (R-FL) introduced H.R.973, to prevent the misuse of foreign law in United States federal courts. The bill states: "In any court created by or under Article III of the Constitution of the United States, no justice, judge, or other judicial official shall decide any issue in a case before that court in whole or in part on the authority of foreign law, except to the extent the Constitution or an Act of Congress requires the consideration of that foreign law." (Religious Freedom Coalition)

Intercede that foreign law would not be used as a means to find common interpretation of treaties. Ask the Lord to hold back foreign enemies from coming through our domestic legal system.

“The king of Assyria was told, ‘The nations that you have carried away and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the law of the god of the land. Therefore he has sent lions among them, and behold, they are killing them, because they do not know the law of the god of the land.’” (2 Kings 17:26)