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## Focus on Religious Freedom

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### Congressional Legislation Bearing on Religious Freedom

In its [2026 Report](#), “The State of Religious Liberty in the United States,” the Committee for Religious Liberty of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) calls attention to legislation pending in Congress that impacts on religious freedom:

#### **The Bishops SUPPORT:**

*Equal Campus Access Act (H.R.5505/S.2859)*: Sponsored by Rep. Tim Walberg of Michigan and Sen. James Lankford of Oklahoma, this bill would prohibit funding, under the Higher Education Act of 1965, to any public higher education institution that denies to religious student organizations, because of their religious beliefs, practices, speech, or standards, “any right, benefit, or privilege” granted to other student organizations.

*Conscience Protection Act (H.R.3411/S.1756)*: Sponsored by Sen. Lankford and Rep. August Pfluger of Texas, this bill, “a long-standing USCCB priority,” would “prohibit discrimination against health care entities that do not participate in abortion and would also strengthen federal conscience protection laws.”

*FACE Act Repeal Act (H.R.589/S.223)*: In 1994, the Bishops opposed passage of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, concerned that it “would lead to discriminatory prosecutions against peaceful pro-life protesters. In the thirty years since,” they note, “it has been used almost exclusively to protect abortion clinics,” while “increased violence against life-saving pregnancy help centers and churches” following the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* has gone “largely unchallenged by the federal government”—even though these entities are also supposed to be protected by the FACE law. The Bishops support the repeal bill sponsored by Rep. Chip Roy of Texas and Sen. Mike Lee of Utah.

#### **The Bishops OPPOSE:**

*Women’s Health Protection Act (H.R.12/S.2150)*: This bill, sponsored by Rep. Judy Chu of California and Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, “would impose abortion on demand at any stage of pregnancy through federal statute.” It would invalidate state restrictions on even late-term abortions, and would “likely trump state and federal conscience laws that protect the right of health care providers and professionals, employers, and insurers not to perform, assist in, refer for, cover, or pay for abortion.”

**“Preserve your government with the utmost attention and solicitude, for it is the remarkable gift from heaven.” - Rev. Samuel Langdon, 1788**