Knights of Columbus Files

Formal Comment on HHS Mandate

Supreme Knight asks Administration to ‘chart another course’

The Knights of Columbus filed a formal comment with the United States Department of Health and Human Services today, calling on the government to rethink the unpopular healthcare Mandate that seeks to force many Catholic employers to cover interventions that violate their faith without regard for the First Amendment’s guarantee of the free exercise of religion.

The letter, signed by Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, urged “the Administration to rescind the Mandate altogether,” or at least “to expand the religious exemption so that it covers all objecting individuals and organizations from cooperating in actions that genuinely offend their religious beliefs and moral convictions.”

“To exempt only some institutions on the principle of respect for religious liberty, as the Government seems to contemplate, and to refuse to exempt individuals makes no sense. The right to the free exercise of religion enshrined in the First Amendment extends to the people,” the letter says.

In the letter, the Knights noted that the Mandate “requires private Catholic individuals and entities, including organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, to violate their most deeply held religious beliefs,” and that “it appears to do so in violation of federal law and the First Amendment of the Constitution.” The letter also pointed out that “it is improper to deny statutory and First Amendment rights to religious liberty in order to create an entitlement to sterilization, abortifacients, and contraception.”

The letter makes clear that “there is no reason why the Affordable Care Act should not conform to those protections that exist in other contexts throughout the law, both at the state and federal level, and have stood for decades.” In sum, the letter urges that “whatever the intent of the Mandate, and whatever form it takes, it should not compel religious individuals to pay for what they believe is morally wrong. It is time for this Administration to chart another course.”

Following the U.S. Supreme Court’s June 28 decision on healthcare, the supreme knight released a statement in which he pointed out that the court did not address the constitutionality of the HHS Mandate. “As we stated in our comment to the Department of Health and Human Services, it is clear that HHS Mandate violates the First Amendment’s protection of our free exercise of religion,” he said. “We continue to urge that the HHS Mandate be repealed, or at a minimum, that sufficient protections of conscience be added to protect religious individuals and institutions.”

The full text of the letter is available at www.kofc.org/Mandate

Telling Our Story of Service

A Quick Look at the Fraternal Survey

The numbers are dramatic and provide a global portrait of the Knights of Columbus that is far beyond the view from your local council. All those individual council activities really add up! The Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity tells the tale of what the Knights of Columbus, from the international to local levels, accomplished this year. Here’s a quick look at 2011.

- State councils, local councils, assemblies, circles, and the Supreme Council total contributions: $158,084,514
- Total volunteer/fraternal activity hours: 70,053,149
- Total meetings held during the fraternal year: 294,944
- Number of blood donors: 418,841
- Visits to sick and bereaved: 4,984,011
- Estimated hours of fraternal service: 9,412,830
- Volunteer hours for Habitat for Humanity: 325,364
- Donations to Church activities: $47,288,445
- Donations to community activities: $53,019,168
- Donations to youth activities: $18,959,048
- 10-year cumulative charitable disbursements: $1,436,712,757
- 10-year estimated hours of volunteer service: 664,285,398

These numbers are impressive, but tell only a part of our story. Approximately 78 percent of all K of C units responded to the 2011 Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity. Imagine what our numbers would look like if we had a 100 percent response.

For a more detailed look at our Order’s accomplishments in the past year, view the Supreme Knight’s Annual Report to the 130th Supreme Council Annual Meeting at www.kofc.org/convention.
K of C Essay Contest
The essay contest is open to all Catholic students — in public, private or parochial schools — in grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 during the current school year. Councils are encouraged to sponsor essay contests at Catholic schools in their communities. Contest participants are asked to write a 500-700 word essay based on a quote.

Soccer Challenge
The Knights of Columbus Soccer Challenge is designed for players to demonstrate the most basic of soccer skills — the penalty kick. The Soccer Challenge is open to all boys and girls in your community, ages 10-14. The contest will take place on the council, district, regional, state and international levels. Order the Official Guide to the Knights of Columbus Soccer Challenge (#4576) from the Supply Department for all the details. The program is also outlined in the Soccer Challenge Kit (#6SC-KIT).

Council Audit
The Semiannual Council Audit Report (#1295) — for the period ending June 30 — is due at the Supreme Council by Aug. 15. Make sure the trustees complete the audit immediately and send it to: Knights of Columbus, Council Accounts, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326. The report can be found at kofc.org/forms and in the Council Report Forms Booklet.

Free Throw Championship
The Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship kit contains posters, entry forms, and a step-by-step guide on conducting a championship and certificates. The competition is divided into groups by age and gender. Order kits for these activities by using the appropriate forms in the Council Report Forms Booklet (#1436) or at kofc.org/forms. Additional information on these programs can be found under the “Youth” heading at kofc.org/service.

Officers Recruiting Challenge
The most successful council officers are those who lead by example. Council officers should be actively engaged in the recruitment of new members. To encourage officers to set a good example, the Supreme Council has inaugurated a new incentive program – the Officers Recruiting Challenge.

The Officers Recruiting Challenge will run during the first quarter of the fraternal year, from July 1 – September 30, 2012. When each council officer recruits a new member during that period, the council will be awarded:

• 26,000 V.I.P. Points, which can be redeemed for items in the Gift Catalog (#1427).
• As a special offer, 26,000 V.I.P. Points can be redeemed for a new set of council officer jewels (PG-130).
• Each proposer will be awarded his 500 V.I.P. Points, in addition to the council’s bonus points.

The Officers Recruiting Challenge must be a team effort. Councils will only qualify for this promotion if each officer does his part, in unity with his brother Knights.

To receive the bonus points, each council must submit a form to report their recruitment activity. This form will be mailed to grand knights and made available on the Knights of Columbus Web site.

The summer months are a great time for councils to organize activities in their parishes, and this is also a prime opportunity to recruit new members. Here are some suggestions:

• Host an Open House, so parishioners can learn more about the Knights of Columbus.
• Invite your local field agent to speak at a Fraternal Benefits Night.
• Organize a BBQ or family picnic, encourage members to bring their wives and children.
• Work with your pastor to plan a weekend retreat, so men can grow in their faith.
• Invite parishioners to join in a new service activity, like building a house with Habitat for Humanity or hosting a local Special Olympics competition.
• Host an Installation of Council Officers, if your council hasn’t already done so.
• Recognize the achievements of the past fraternal year with a council award program.
• Men join the Knights of Columbus to participate in council programs and serve their communities. All recruitment efforts should be connected to an opportunity for members to get involved in volunteer service.
• Working together, we can strengthen our parishes and communities. Together, we can build a better world.

World Day of Prayer for Peace
This Sept. 11 marks the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the United States. In observing the Knights of Columbus World Day of Prayer for Peace on that anniversary, we recall the tragic events and honor the thousands who lost their lives. We also pray for peace among nations, especially in those places where war or turmoil persist. All Knights of Columbus leaders are urged to begin planning for this event now and hold an appropriate prayer service in a church, or in a public place such as a war memorial, a municipal park, or on the grounds of the town or city hall. To assist your council in its participation in this event, the Supreme Council offers a Day of Prayer poster (#9483) and prayer card (#9484). For more information please visit kofc.org/prayerforpeace.
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**Winners of the 2011-2012 Star Council, Columbian, Father McGivney and Founders’ Awards** have been announced by the Supreme Court office. Star Council winners numbered 1,079, led by (as of June 30, 2012) Luzon with 112 councils, California with 59 councils and Texas with 59 councils. The totals for the other awards were: 2,774 Columbian Award winners; 2,783 Father McGivney Award winners; and 2,082 Founders’ Award winners. There were also 362 Double Star winners.

Awards are now being engraved and will be forwarded to the district deputies of record. Awards will be sent to the state deputy, if requested. If a council won only a Founders’ Award, it will be sent to the general agent of record.

A complete listing of award winners follows. The listing is in alphabetical order by jurisdiction and contains the council number followed by one or more of the letters: C (Columbian Award), M (McGivney Award), F (Founders’ Award), S (Star Award) and D (Double Star). Questions concerning any of these awards should be forwarded to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services. Look for a more detailed listing of Star Council winners in a future issue of Columbia magazine.
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<td>Brown</td>
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<td>Davis</td>
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**Notes:**
- Age values are approximate and may vary.
- Gender indicates the self-identified gender of the individual.
- City values are the current residence of the individual.
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<tr>
<td>John Smith</td>
<td>123 Main St</td>
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<td>555-12345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>456 Oak Rd</td>
<td>56789</td>
<td>555-67890</td>
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<td>Michael Brown</td>
<td>789 Elm St</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td>555-98765</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Johnson</td>
<td>101 Pine Dr</td>
<td>56789</td>
<td>555-98765</td>
</tr>
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**Table Notes:**
- **Address:** Street address of the individual.
- **Zip Code:** Zip code associated with the address.
- **Phone Number:** Phone number for contact.

**Contact Information:**
- **John Smith:** 123 Main St, 12345, 555-12345
- **Jane Doe:** 456 Oak Rd, 56789, 555-67890
- **Michael Brown:** 789 Elm St, 12345, 555-98765
- **Sarah Johnson:** 101 Pine Dr, 56789, 555-98765
New Poll Finds Nearly 8 in 10 Americans “Frustrated” by Tone of Political Campaigns

Highlighting the angst of the American electorate over negative campaigning and personal attacks, a new Knights of Columbus-Marist poll finds that the public is increasingly frustrated with the tone of political campaigns and sees the problem getting worse.

The July 2012 survey also found that a strong consensus of Americans believes such negative campaigning is ultimately harmful to the political process.

Nearly 8 in 10 Americans (78 percent) say they are “frustrated” by the tone of political campaigns. Almost three-quarters say the problem is getting worse: 74 percent believe that the tone of political campaigns has “gotten more negative” than in past election years.

In addition, two-thirds of Americans (66 percent) believe candidates spend more time criticizing their opponents than addressing the issues, while almost as many (64 percent) say negative campaign ads “harm the political process” either “a great deal” or “a significant amount.”

“The American people want and deserve civility and a conversation on the issues rather than the personal vilification of political opponents,” said Knights of Columbus Supreme Knight Carl Anderson. “As this current data makes all too clear, the American people want a political discussion that is civil and respectful. As Americans, we understand that we may not agree on every aspect of every issue, but we also understand that how we disagree says a great deal about who we are as a nation.”

To sign the petition requesting candidates, the media and other advocates and commentators involved in the public policy arena employ a more civil tone in public discourse on political and social issues, focusing on policies rather than on individual personalities, visit civilityinamerica.org.

Knights Participate in ‘Fortnight for Freedom’

The call of the U.S. Catholic bishops for a “Fortnight for Freedom” to defend religious liberty was a historic moment for Catholics in the United States. This fourteen day period of “prayer, study, catechesis, and public action” from the vigil of the Feasts of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More on June 21st to Independence Day on July 4th was a vital opportunity to reflect on the great gift of religious freedom and work for its preservation.

In his opening homily for the “Fortnight for Freedom” at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption in Baltimore, Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori preached, “Even if current threats like the HHS mandate were to be overcome, we would still have to face powerful forces which seek to prevent religious faith from exerting an appropriate and necessary influence within our culture.”

Knights and their families participated in religious liberty rallies throughout the country, like this one held on the green in New Haven, Conn.

Led by Fourth Degree Knights, Msgr. Steven L. Brovey and Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone of Charleston carry the Blessed Sacrament in procession to Battery Park to mark the launch of the Fortnight for Freedom. Knights escorted the Eucharist to an outdoor altar by the sea, where participants prayed for a resolution to recent assaults on religious freedom. (Douglas Deas/The Catholic Miscellany, Diocese of Charleston, S.C.)

Pope Presents Pallium to Supreme Chaplain Archbishop Lori

Pope Benedict XVI presented a pallium to Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, Supreme Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus, during a June 29 Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica. (CNS photo/Stefano Rellandini, Reuters).
How is your life going? Are you happy with your daily activity — the work you do? I know I’ve read somewhere the percentage of our lives we spend at work, but I don’t remember the exact number. It’s a big one, though.

If you’re happy with what you’re doing during those working hours — really happy — you can stop reading now, and accept my congratulations for making a good choice in your life. But if you have a small twinge of discontent, or a grating feeling in the pit of your stomach that says “Is this all there is?”, then read on. And — if you know a brother Knight who you suspect might be feeling that twinge, give this article to him.

You have nothing to lose by talking to us about a career with the Knights of Columbus. We have openings all across the United States and Canada for field agents — life insurance salesmen — and it just might be the career you’re looking for. One that lets you do well for yourself while also doing good for others. Where the amount of work you do allows you to earn without limit. Where you can give the job the time it needs and deserves, and still not miss your child’s next soccer game or school play. Where you make a difference in the lives of those you meet…you really do help. Where, when you lay your head on the pillow at night, you can be comforted by the fact that world is a better place because place to be.

The job is not for everyone. Sometimes those who talk to us decide that they would be better served elsewhere, and sometimes we make that decision. Either way, you haven’t lost anything by finding out if maybe there might be a better way to spend your working life.

So what do you think? If that feeling is there — “Is this all there is?” — drop me an e-mail and I’ll get someone in touch. Just a conversation. Nothing to lose.

To learn more contact Steven Fedewa, Vice President, Manpower, Growth and Development, at steven.fedewa@kofc.org.