



Should Abortion Be Part of the Healthcare Debate?

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As America moves forward with a debate about healthcare reform pro-life groups say abortion and doctor-assisted suicide need to be part of the discussion.

Senator Bernie Sanders held a town-hall meeting in Burlington, Monday night, to promote the single-payer system for healthcare. Outside that meeting, about a dozen pro-life Vermonters rallied to make sure their issues become part of the reform debate.

The protestors want to make sure that as America embarks on an effort to change its healthcare system it does not use tax dollars to fund abortions or cut costs by relying on doctor-assisted suicides for terminally ill patients.

"There are moral objections to taxpaying Vermonters who don't want to be involved in abortion and paying for abortions and then there's certainly the said idea that someone in need of medical care is told "no you're too expensive, we're not going to help you but we will pay for your lethal dose.'" said Mary Hahn Beerworth, executive director of Vermont Right to Life.

Vermont Right to Life says that has already happened twice in Oregon where doctor assisted suicide is allowed. As the healthcare debate picks up right to life groups say we should expect to hear a lot more from them.

"It will be very controversial and we expect to be part of that conversation," said Beerworth.

Senator Bernie Sanders, I-Vermont, who has been leading the effort to move America to a single-payer government backed healthcare system says the country needs to worry about the 46 million uninsured people, not limited issues like abortion or doctor assisted suicide.

"I am pro-choice, I know that there are people who have different points of view, I respect their points of view," said Sanders. "What I want to do and I think what we need to do as a country is focus on how we can provide quality healthcare to every man woman and child as a right and do it in a cost effective way and I hope we don't get splintered up in a thousand different ways before we get to the essential issue."

What that essential issue is depends on who is weighing in on the debate.

The director of Vermont Right to Life says while the issue of abortion will be more prevalent during healthcare reform, Americans should not worry about more violence against physicians who perform abortions. She said anyone who murders an abortion provider is not truly pro-life but is "unhinged" and "no sane."

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