

# Silence is consent on health care reform

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien released the following statement Dec. 24, after the U.S. Senate passed its version of a health care reform bill:

"As expected, Maryland's two U.S. senators were among the 60 members of the U.S. Senate this morning to approve a version of health care reform legislation that sadly falls short in three areas of critical importance to the Catholic community: respect for life, affordability/access, and inclusion of immigrants."

I am taken aback at the mildly worded description of legislation that would use taxpayer funds for abortion, require coercive participation, add billions of debt to our children, cut billions in care for seniors, include illegal immigrants and give enormous power to dictate health care procedures to the federal government.

Our Maryland legislators (with one non-Catholic exception) will enthusiastically support this legislation. They are immune to pro-life arguments and calls to write to them, such as Senator Mikulski, are a joke. Archbishop O'Brien said Oct. 18 at the Basilica of the Assumption, "It is all too obvious that today's culture of death tolerates no competition." I believe that. Our only recourse is to firmly oppose this legislation with prayer and fasting and to remember these votes in 2010. Silence is consent.