



Written by [Ann Shibley](#) on July 16, 2009

Surgeon General Nominee Regina Benjamin

Since the current president supports abortion on demand and public funding of abortions, along with public funding of contraception and sex education in the schools, in order to decrease “unintended pregnancies,” Dr. Benjamin presumably holds these beliefs as well, if Cherlin’s statement is accurate. Anyway, [the Miami Herald thinks so](#).

Most noted for her charitable work and noble causes — her clinic serves poor minority shrimpers on the Gulf Coast, with Benjamin often using her own money to keep the clinic open — she also was on both the Catholic Health Association’s board of trustees and Physicians for Human Rights board. PHR is an international group that seeks to reverse pro-life laws and promotes access to abortions, and investigates human rights conditions in some countries.



Therefore, holding positions on both boards would seem to be a contradiction. Catholic teaching precludes one from supporting any type of abortion rights as well as promoting or participating in counseling for abortion or providing contraception.

Dr. Benjamin does not perform abortions at the clinic; abortion inquiries are referred to other providers. One report was careful to point out that Dr. Benjamin has never had a relationship with a Planned Parenthood clinic or officials. Planned Parenthood is the nation’s largest abortion provider.

Reid Cherlin also commented that Dr. Benjamin believes that the issues of abortion rights and public funding of contraception are where “it is important to try and seek common ground and come together to try and reduce the number of unintended pregnancies. As a physician, she is deeply committed to the philosophy of putting her patients’ needs first when it comes to providing care.”

The [New York Times ran an editorial](#) portraying Dr. Benjamin as a selfless, caring, competent, determined country doctor — glowing terms. Her work with the poor is indeed commendable. But if she were to become the nation’s top doctor, what message would she send regarding abortion, and what effect would that message have?

Does Dr. Benjamin really embrace Obama’s abortion agenda, or will she maintain some modicum of Catholic pro-life teaching? Health and Human Services has said that Dr. Benjamin would not be speaking to reporters until after her Senate confirmation. But she could clear any confusion — both pro-aborts and pro-lifers are cautious about endorsing her — over her position in one fell swoop if she but spoke up. The nation has the right to know who their senators will be confirming for Surgeon General.

If, as Dr. Benjamin is reported to have commented to the *New York Times*, she “wants to act as a voice



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for patients and make sure that no one falls through the cracks," and that she "wants to focust on preventing disease," she might keep in mind those most defenseless and vulnerable little ones still in the womb.

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