



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on March 5, 2012

NOW Says Clergymen Want Police Power on Birth Control

President Terry O'Neil (left) of the National Organization of Women announced on March 1: "The bishops have not been able to convince Catholic women to not take birth control. We know this because 98 percent of sexually active [Catholic] women take birth control at some point in their lives — just like 98 percent of sexually active non-Catholic women take birth control at some point in their lives. So the bishops have failed and the evangelical preachers that don't want their women to take birth control — they have failed."



Because of this failure, O'Neil said, Catholic and Protestant religious leaders are now "...demanding that the government step in and use the force and power and police power of the state to prevent women from taking birth control because the bishops have failed." O'Neill was joined by a variety of other feminist organizations purporting to speak for all American women.

The testimony that prompted these remarks was from religious leaders who spoke before a House committee on February 16 against the Obama administration's health care mandate that birth control be provided. The specific objection of these leaders was that the federal requirements ran contrary to their religious teachings. In the Judeo-Christian heritage, children are considered blessings and the biblical injunction "Be fruitful and multiply" is taken seriously.

Critics say that the characterization of this objection as trying to prevent birth control, however, is not true, and that there was no call by these religious leaders for federal, state, or local laws to prevent or even to regulate the use or distribution of birth control devices. There are a variety of different birth control methods, some of which have never been controversial. Abstinence, for example, for unmarried people has long been enjoined by most of the world's religions.

Adding clarification to this issue is Texas Congressman Ron Paul — also an obstetrician and gynecologist — who can hardly be accused of indifference to women's health issues. For decades he has given medical advice to women on issues related to conception. Paul also has a strong free market political philosophy. When asked about the issue on CNN, he observed,

It's a rather silly argument about who's going to get free birth-control pills. That is way beyond the pale, as far as I'm concerned. To say that you have to have on this policy, with no increase in pricing, you're going to give out birth control pills, that becomes a welfare issue and a mandate and a cost to the insurance policy.

I remember when I first bought my first insurance coverage, the question was, "Do you want OB coverage in your policy?" I said yes; they said, "Well, that will cost you so many more dollars per month." How can it be insurance if they don't know what they're insuring you for?

It appears that NOW and related groups purporting to advance the interests of women really want is a



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combination of anti-religious policy with socialism. The idea that religions, particularly those of the Western tradition, may have rules that guide sexual behavior and which actually elevate the status of women seems to have eluded these women. The notion that liberty includes the right to hold and to practice those beliefs, even if others would want you to, also seems to have been lost in the combination of entitlements and feminism. And, as Congressman Paul observed, the dream that there is a free lunch — or a free birth control pill — is also lost on feminists who see the government as the provider of every good or service which, without government, the free market provides to consumers.



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