

A last-minute Bush administration plan to grant sweeping new protections to health care providers who oppose abortion and other procedures on religious or moral grounds has provoked a torrent of objections, including a strenuous protest from the government agency that enforces job discrimination laws.

The proposed rule would prohibit recipients of federal money from discriminating against doctors, nurses and other health care workers who refuse to perform or to assist in the performance of abortions or sterilization procedures because of their “religious beliefs or moral convictions.”

It would also prevent hospitals, clinics, doctors’ offices and drugstores from requiring employees with religious or moral objections to “assist in the performance of any part of a health service program or research activity” financed by the Department of Health and Human Services.

But three officials from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, including its legal counsel, whom President Bush appointed, said the proposal would overturn 40 years of civil rights law prohibiting job discrimination based on religion.

**TVNL Comment: It is very hard to think of Bush's name without thinking of several exipitives!**

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