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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 10, 2010

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A VETO OF HB 1143 GIVES THE GREEN LIGHT FOR TAXPAYER FUNDED ABORTIONS IN FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE – House Bill 1143, which prohibits taxpayer dollars from being used to fund elective abortions, is expected to reach the Governor’s desk soon. This legislation employs the option specifically allowed to the states under the federal health care reform legislation recently signed into law by President Obama. The following provisions are contained in the federal health care law:

- Section 1303 (c) says “Nothing in this Act shall be construed to preempt or otherwise have any effect on State laws regarding the prohibition of (or requirement of) coverage, funding, or procedural requirements on abortions...”
- Section 1303 (a) says “A State may elect to prohibit abortion coverage in qualified health plans offered through an Exchange in such a State if such State enacts law to provide for such prohibition.”

“This bill extends a long-standing policy of our nation and our state prohibiting tax dollars being used to fund elective abortions,” said Representative Kelli Stargel (R-Lakeland). “This option is expressly allowed to our state in the federal health care reform legislation signed by President Obama, and the Governor should ensure that current policy of preventing taxpayer dollars from funding abortions continues. Whether you are pro-choice or pro-life, taking money from the pockets of Floridians to fund abortions should not be the policy in our state, and I urge the Governor to sign this bill.”

Restricting the use of taxpayer dollars for abortions has been the policy of our nation for over three decades. In 1976, an overwhelming Democratic-controlled United States House of Representatives passed the Hyde Amendment which barred publicly funded abortions. The State of Florida has never offered taxpayer funded elective abortion. Exceptions for cases of rape or incest, or situations where the life of the mother is in danger are specifically provided for in both the Hyde amendment and in HB 1143. A veto of this bill by Governor Crist would reverse a 34 year old policy and allow taxpayer funded abortion in Florida for the first time in the state’s history.

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