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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LINCOLN, NE—December 20, 2009

The Catholic Bishops of Nebraska, Archbishop George Lucas of Omaha, Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz of Lincoln and Bishop William Dendinger of Grand Island, issued the following statement regarding Senator Ben Nelson's acceptance of abortion funding language in the Senate health care bill:

"We are extremely disappointed in Senator Ben Nelson's decision to accept language in the Senate health care bill that would expand the federal government's role of enabling abortions and force citizens to pay for others' abortions. We urge him to reconsider this decision and to insist on language that mirrors the provisions adopted by the House of Representatives in the Stupak-Pitts Amendment.

Senator Nelson gave numerous public assurances that he would insist on abortion-funding language consistent with longstanding federal policies. Unfortunately, the language he accepted for the so-called manager's amendment fails to fulfill these assurances.

We remain strong proponents of health care reform that protects human life and conscience rights, is fair to legal immigrants and improves affordability. However, given its serious problems with abortion funding, this Senate bill should be opposed."