

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) has signed on to legislation to prohibit public funding for the purposes of providing abortion, calling the measure a common-sense protection for taxpayers.

"I think it is highly important that we have a law in place that reflects the intention of Congress to prohibit federal funds, taxpayer dollars, for abortion. Not only should we do so to protect the conscience of taxpayers, but also because the role of our federal government should not be to promote abortion. Life in all its forms is precious, and this legislation would make a strong statement," Emerson said.

The legislation codifies the Hyde Amendment, a longstanding, bipartisan policy which permanently prohibited federal funding of abortion across all federal programs. The Hyde Amendment is not a requirement of congressional legislation, leaving enforcement of the provision in the hands of the president.

Speaker of the House John Boehner commented, "This common-sense legislation reflects the will of the people and deserves the support of the House. It is one of our highest legislative priorities. As such, I have directed that it receive the designation of HR 3."

Notably, the Hyde Amendment was suspended for passage of the health care law in Congress in 2010, when President Obama said he would instead implement the intention of the Hyde Amendment through Executive Order.

"I don't think we should leave this important subject open to interpretation, no matter what the Administration's policy may be. The Congress ought to lay out, in black and white, a clear stance on federal funding of abortion. This bill accomplishes that goal," Emerson said.

HR 3 is sponsored by Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ).