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Statement June 17, 2009

My family emigrated from the former Soviet Union to the United States in hopes of finding freedom to act in accordance to their moral beliefs.

My mother was a practicing physician in Ukraine. Going through her medical education, and later practicing medicine, she was never allowed to discuss ethical issues in medicine. There were none. Physicians were forced to act according to the communist agenda, end of discussion.

It was the government that dictated what physicians must believe, and how they should practice. Abortion was never an issue in the Soviet Union, simply because the communist government dictated that it was not an ethical dilemma, and all physicians were required to perform the procedure. Those who disobeyed could not obtain their medical license or continue their practice.

I became very concerned when I learned about President Barack Obama's plan to rescind the conscience clause. It made me uneasy to think that my adopted country, which was always proud of its democratic heritage, had begun to remind me of a communist country my family fled ten years ago.

The United States was built on the principles of freedom to believe and practice in accord with personal religious and moral values. The conscience protection rule is an integral part of protecting these principles.

As a second-year medical student and a future physician, I will be committed to the well-being of my patients. I will also be committed to practicing medicine on the basis of my moral values.

If the conscience rule is rescinded and I am obligated to choose between performing an abortion or losing my job, I will choose the latter.

And then where will I flee next?