

POSITION: SURGEON GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

NOMINEE: Regina Benjamin

BIRTHDATE: October 26, 1956 in Mobile, Alabama

EDUCATION:

B.S. Xavier University of Louisiana

M.D. 1984, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Atlanta's Morehouse School of Medicine

M.B.A. Tulane University, Freeman School of Business

FAMILY: never married; no children

EXPERIENCE:

Completed residency in family practice at the Medical Center of Central Georgia

1987 Founded the Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic in Bayou La Batre, Alabama; rebuilt after Hurricane George, Hurricane Katrina, and extensive fire damage

1995 Elected to the American Medical Association's board of trustees

1996-2002 Board Member, Physicians for Human Rights, Physicians for Human Rights Advisory Council

1998 Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights

2000 National Caring Award (which was inspired by Mother Teresa)

2006 Papal honor Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice from Pope Benedict XVI

Served as President of the American Medical Association's Education and Research Foundation
Named by Time Magazine as one of the "Nation's 50 Future Leaders Age 40 and Under.

President of the Medical Association of Alabama

Appointed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala to the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act Committee and to the Council of Graduate Medical Education, and also a member of the "Step 3 Committee

ON ABORTION

“But the Alabama country doctor also backs Obama's position on reproductive health issues, a position that potentially could put her at odds with the Catholic Church.

‘Like him, she believes that this is an issue where it is important to try and seek common ground and come together to try and reduce the number of unintended pregnancies,’ White House spokesman Reid Cherlin said. ‘As a physician, she is deeply committed to the philosophy of putting her patients' needs first when it comes to providing care.’”

The White House declined to say whether Benjamin supports a woman's right to an abortion, but sources close to her selection say she does.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/17/AR2009071703463.html>

“White House spokesman Reid Cherlin said, however, that Benjamin "supports the president's position on reproductive health issues.”

“Obama supports abortion rights and public funding of contraception and sex education.

“Cherlin continued: "Like him she believes that this is an issue where it is important to try and seek common ground and come together to try and reduce the number of unintended

pregnancies. As a physician, she is deeply committed to the philosophy of putting her patients' needs first when it comes to providing care.”

“Benjamin also was a board member for Physicians for Human Rights, an international group that has advocated access to safe abortions in its investigation of human rights conditions in some countries.”

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/politics/story/71835.html>

Benjamin served as member of Board of Directors of **Physicians for Human Rights**, which specifically advocates for abortion rights in its “Global Health Action Campaign” program: “The freedoms include the right to participate in decisions about one’s health, including sexual and reproductive freedom...”

<http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/right-to-health/conversation-with-helen-potts.html>

“Safe Pregnancy and Safe Abortion as Human Rights”

Initiative of Center for Reproductive Rights

“...is a collaborative effort with groups including CARE, Physicians for Human Rights, and the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University.”

<http://reproductiverights.org/en/document/safe-pregnancy-and-safe-abortion-as-human-rights>

Dr. Benjamin served as a member of the **AMA Board of Trustees**
The Board of Trustees oversees and approves policies of the AMA.

ON ABORTION

“The Principles of Medical Ethics of the AMA do not prohibit a physician from performing an abortion in accordance with good medical practice and under circumstances that do not violate the law.”

“Physicians should not feel or be compelled to require minors to involve their parents before deciding whether to undergo an abortion. The patient, even an adolescent, generally must decide whether, on balance, parental involvement is advisable. Accordingly, minors should ultimately be allowed to decide whether parental involvement is appropriate.”

from: Code of Medical Ethics 2004-2005: Current Opinions with Annotations, AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association; p. 4-5

“Genetic selection refers to the abortion or discard of a fetus or pre-embryo with a genetic abnormality. In general, it is ethically permissible for physicians to participate in genetic selection to prevent, cure, or treat genetic disease.”

from: Code of Medical Ethics 2004-2005: Current Opinions with Annotations, AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association; p. 41

viewer: http://www.amazon.com/Code-Medical-Ethics-2004-2005-Annotations/dp/1579475612/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1247775616&sr=1-3#reader

ON TREATMENT DECISIONS FOR SERIOUSLY ILL NEWBORNS:

“Care must be taken to evaluate the newborn’s expected quality of life from the child’s perspective. Life-sustaining treatment may be withheld or withdrawn from a newborn when the pain and suffering expected to be endured by the child will overwhelm any potential for joy during his or her life.”

from: Code of Medical Ethics 2004-2005: Current Opinions with Annotations, AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association; p. 97

ON CLONING

“While the pluralism of moral visions that underlie this debate must be respected, physicians collectively must continue to be guided by their paramount obligation to the welfare of their patients. In this light, cloning-for-biomedical-research is consistent with medical ethics. Every physician remains free to decide whether to participate in stem cell research or to use its products.”

from: Code of Medical Ethics 2004-2005: Current Opinions with Annotations, AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association; p. 53

“Two potentially realistic and possibly appropriate medical uses of cloning-to-produce-children are for assisting individuals or couples to reproduce and for generating tissues when the donor is not harmed or sacrificed.”

from: Code of Medical Ethics 2004-2005: Current Opinions with Annotations, AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association; p. 55

ON HEALTH CARE

“These are trying times in the health care field. And as a nation, we have reached a sobering realization: Our health care system simply cannot continue on the path that we’re on. Millions of Americans can’t afford health insurance, or they don’t have the basic health services available where they live.”

“It should not be this hard for doctors and other health care providers to care for their patients. It shouldn’t be this expensive for Americans to get health care in this country. And, Mr. President, thank you for putting health care reform at the top of your domestic agenda.”

http://www.boston.com/news/politics/politicalintelligence/2009/07/obama_picks_rur.html