

Symposium on Religion and Politics

HHS Mandate Debate

President Obama's Remarks on Shift in Contraception Policy
Barack Obama
2 Feb. 2012

As part of the healthcare reform law that I signed last year, insurance plans are required to cover preventative healthcare at no cost. That means free check-ups, free mammograms, immunizations and other basic services.

We fought for this because it saves lives and ~~use~~ it saves money for families, for businesses, for government, for everybody. And that's because it's cheaper to prevent an illness than to treat one.

We also accepted a recommendation from the experts at the Institute of Medicine that when it comes to women, preventative care should include coverage of contraceptive services such as birth control.

In addition to family planning, doctors often prescribe contraception as a way to reduce the risk of ovarian and other cancers and to treat a variety of different ailments. And we know that the overall cost of health care is lower when women have access to contraceptive services.

Nearly 99 percent of all women have relied on contraception at some point in their lives. Ninety-nine percent. And yet more than half of all women between the ages of 18-34 have struggled to afford it. So for all these reasons, we decided to follow the judgment of the nation's leading medical experts and make sure that free preventive care includes access to free contraceptive care.

Whether you're a teacher or a small business woman, a nurse or a janitor, no woman's health should depend on who she is or where she works or how much money she makes. Every woman should be in control of the decisions that affect her own health. Period.

This basic principle is already the law in 28 states across the country. Now as we move to implement this rule, however, we've been mindful that there is another principle at stake here. And that's the principle of religious liberty, an inalienable right that has been enshrined in our Constitution.

As a citizen and as a Christian, I cherish this right. In fact my first job in Chicago was working with Catholic Parishes in poor neighborhoods. Any salary was funded by a grant from an arm of the Catholic church. And I saw that local churches often did more good for a community than a government program ever could. So I know how important the work that faith based organizations have a

And that's why from the very beginning of this process, I spoke directly to various Catholic officials. And I promised that before finalizing the rule as it applied to them, we would spend the next year working with institutions like Catholic hospitals and Catholic universities to find an equitable solution that protects religious liberty and ensures every woman has access to the care that she needs.

Now, after the many genuine concerns that have been raised over the last few weeks, as well as frankly the more cynical desire on the part of some to make this into a political football, it became clear that spending months hammering out a solution was not going to be an option. That we needed to move this faster.

So last week, I directed the Department of Health and Human Services to speed up the process that had already been envisioned. We weren't going to spend a year doing this. We're going to spend a week or two doing this.

Today, we reached a decision on how to move forward. Under the rule, women will still have access to free preventive care. That includes contraceptive services no matter where they work. So that core principle remains, but if a woman's employer is charity or hospital that has a religious objection to providing contraceptive services in the health plan, the insurance company not the hospital, not the charity will be required to reach out and offer the woman contraceptive care free of charge without co-pays and without hassles.

The results will be that religious organizations won't have to pay for these services, and no religious institution will have to provide these services directly. Let me repeat: these employers won't have to pay for or provide contraceptive services. But women who work at these institutions will have access to free contraceptive services just like other women and they'll no longer have to pay hundreds of dollars a year that could go towards paying the rent or buying groceries.

I've been confident from the start that we could work out a sensible approach here, just as I promised. I understand some folks in Washington might want to treat this as a political wedge issue. But it shouldn't be. I certainly never saw it that way. This is an issue where people of good will on both sides of the debate have been able to work through some very complicated questions to find a solution that works for everyone.

With today's announcement we've done that. Religious liberty will be protected, and a law that requires pre preventive care will not discriminate against women. We live in a pluralistic society where we're not going to agree on every issue or share every belief. That doesn't mean that we have to choose between individual liberty and basic fairness for all Americans.

We are unique among nations for having been founded upon both these principles and our obligation as citizens to carry them forward. We have complete faith that we can do that. Thank you very much everybody.

Remarks at Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC)
Mitt Romney
February 10, 2012

This year, here at CPAC, we've got a great crowd. It's been a great conference. For that I suppose we should acknowledge President Obama, the conservative movement's top recruiter. Turns out, he really is a great community organizer. Although, I don't think we were the community he had in mind.

Today we are poised for a great victory in November. The pundits and the pollsters tell us we can win this election. But we must tell the nation we should win. It is up to us to prove that we are truly ready to step forward and lead this country. This election is not just about getting more votes. Defeating Barack Obama is only a step toward our greater goal of saving America.

Of course we can defeat Barack Obama! That's the easy part! Believe me, November 6th will be the easiest day our next President will face.

This country we love is in jeopardy. It's more than the economic statistics we read, it's the pain we feel in our hearts. For three years we have suffered through the failures not only of a weak leader, but of a bankrupt ideology. I am convinced that if we do our job, if we lead with conviction and integrity, that this story will record the Obama Presidency as the last gasp of liberalism's great failure and a turning point for a new conservative era.

But it's not enough to show how they have failed. We must prove we deserve to lead. I am here today to ask you to stand with me shoulder to shoulder as we go forward to fight for America.

As we step forward together, now is the time to reaffirm what it means to be a conservative and why this must be our greatest honor. America is like no other country in history. At the very heart of our American conservatism is the conviction that the principles embodied in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence are uniquely powerful, foundational, and defining. Some see the hand of Providence in their authorship. Others credit the brilliance of the Founders. Many of us see both. But conservatives all agree that departing from these founding principles is a departure from the greatness of America-- from our mission, from our freedom, from our prosperity, and from our purpose.

As governor of Massachusetts, I had the unique experience of defending our conservative principles in the most liberal state in our union.

When I took office, I was facing a \$3 billion budget deficit and an economy in a tailspin.

Even with a legislature that was 85% Democrat, I cut taxes 19 times and balanced the budget all four years. I cast over 800 vetoes and cut entitlement programs. I erased a \$3 billion budget shortfall and left office with a \$2 billion rainy day fund. If there was a program, an agency, or a department that needed cutting, we cut it. As a commentator once said that I didn't just go after the sacred cows, I went after the whole herd. And I can't wait to get my hands on Washington.

During my tenure, our conservative values also came under attack. Less than a year after I took office, the state's supreme court inexplicably found a right to same-sex marriage in our constitution. I pushed for a stay of the decision, fought for a marriage amendment to our constitution, and successfully prohibited out-of-state couples from coming to our state to get married and then go home. On my watch, I fought hard and prevented Massachusetts from becoming the Las Vegas of gay marriage. When President, I will preserve the Defense of Marriage Act and I will fight for a federal amendment defining marriage as a relationship between one man and one woman.

During my time in office, I stood up to those who wanted to call into question the very definition of life. I vetoed a bill that would have opened the door to cloning and embryo farming. I vetoed a bill that would have allowed young girls to gain access to abortion-inducing drugs. I fought for abstinence education in our public schools. And I defended the Catholic Church's right to serve their community in ways that were consistent with their conscience through adoption programs that placed children in a home with a mom and a dad.

I was a conservative governor. I fought against all odds in a deep blue state. I understand the battles that we, as conservatives, must fight because I have been on the front lines.

Here at CPAC, I know you understand this. That gathering has always warmed me. And you have consistently supported me – not because of my rhetoric, but because of my record.

Over the course of this conference, several candidates either have been – or will come – before you seeking to lead our country out of these troubled times. What distinguishes us from one another is not our opposition to President Obama or even our support for conservative convictions. What distinguishes us is the nature of our experience, our perspective, and our judgment.

This election will ultimately be about two very different visions for America. But our more immediate choice will be between candidates from two very different backgrounds.

I spent 25 years in business, starting at the bottom and going on to help create a great American success story. I led an Olympics out of the shadows of scandal and turned around a state crying out for leadership.

In each of these endeavors, I worked with talented people, but I was the Chief Executive. Success or failure lay on my shoulders. When tough decisions had to be made, I made them.

Leadership as a Chief Executive isn't about getting out of subcommittee or giving a speech – it's about setting clear goals and overcoming constant adversity, about sharing credit when times are good and taking responsibility for failure.

I am the only candidate in this race, Republican or Democrat, who has never worked a day in Washington. I don't have old scores to settle or decades of cloakroom deals to defend.

As conservatives, you've learned to be skeptical of this city and its politicians and right you are.

My wife and I raised five boys and one of the lessons you learn is that when you hear an excuse that just doesn't make sense... it's because it doesn't make sense. And let me tell you, any politician who tries to convince you that they hated Washington so much that they just couldn't leave, well, that's the same politician who will try to sell you a Bridge to Nowhere.

This is a moment when our country needs serious change and real reform. So, let me tell you exactly what kind of President I will be.

To get America back on track and get Americans back to work, we need bold and sweeping reforms. These are not managerial issues of fixing this department or that agency. To change Washington, we must change the relationship between government and citizen. These are moral choices that will define us for generations to come.

Today we borrow almost forty cents of every dollar we spend. That is unconscionable. It's unsustainable. It's reckless. It's immoral. And, if I am President, it will end.

I will approach every spending decision by asking a few important questions: Can we afford it? And, if not, is it worth borrowing money from China to pay for it?

As President, I will not just slow the growth of government, I will cut it. I will not just freeze government's share of the total economy, I will reduce it. And, without raising taxes or sacrificing America's military superiority, I will finally balance the budget.

And that will start with the easiest of all – I will eliminate Obamacare.

I will dramatically reduce the size of the federal workforce. And for the first time ever, we will tie the compensation and benefits of federal workers to those in the private sector. The principle here is simple: public servants should not get a better deal than the citizens they serve.

But cutting spending and bureaucracy alone won't be enough. In their current form, Social Security and Medicare are unsustainable. And we cannot afford to avoid our entitlement challenges any longer.

I am the only candidate for President who has offered a sweeping, specific plan to save Social Security and reform Medicare. There are those who say you can't talk straight to the American people on these key issues and still win an election. I say we can, we must, and I will!

These are sensible and critical reforms. Under my plan, no one at or near the retirement age will see any changes. And talks are off the table.

We will slowly and gradually raise the retirement age for Social Security – and, we will slow the growth in benefits for our nation's higher-income retirees.

When it comes to Medicare, tomorrow's seniors should have the freedom to choose between traditional Medicare and a range of private plans. If these future seniors choose a more expensive plan, they would bear the additional cost.

I know this President and his liberal allies will attack me heading where he has failed. So be it. I will stand and fight – and we will win.

He will attack us with the usual fear tactics, but we will remind Americans that during this President's term we have seen record high jobless rates and record home foreclosures. We will not be lectured to on values by the man whose intransigence and failure has created so much unnecessary pain for our fellow Americans.

Ours will not be the easy course. But it will be the right course. And I am confident that Americans are yearning for a President to do what is needed, not what is expedient.

And let me be clear: Mine will be a pro-life presidency.

On day one, I will reinstate the Mexico City policy.

I will cut off funding for the United Nations Population Fund, which supports China's barbaric One Child Policy.

I will ensure that organizations like Planned Parenthood get no federal support.

And I will reverse every single Obama regulation that attacks our religious liberty and threatens innocent life.

The Presidency is more than a public office; it is a sacred trust. As President, I will honor that trust by assuring that America remains the greatest military power on the face of the earth. This is very simple: If you do not want America to be the strongest nation on earth, I am not your President. You have that President today.

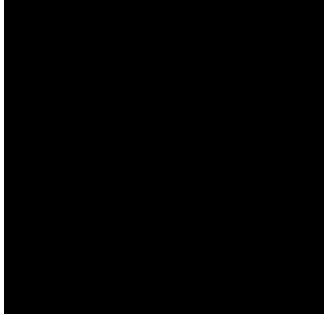
This election is a defining moment for our generation and for the conservative movement. Make no mistake – we have an opportunity for Greatness but with that opportunity comes defining responsibility. We cannot let this election to refight past battles or reward our friends. I know

that the fundamental change this moment demands will take fresh, bold conservative leadership with real world solutions based on real world experience.

I will come to Washington, and, with your help and guidance and prayers, I will change Washington. And then I will leave Washington to go back to the life and family I love.

I believe this is a moment that demands we return to our basic values and first principals. This is our moment. This is why we are conservative. The task before us now is to reaffirm the convictions that unite us and go forward shoulder to shoulder to secure the victory America deserves.

Thank you and God bless.



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty

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We are Catholics. We are Americans. We are proud to be both, grateful for the gift of faith which is ours as Christian disciples, and grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean not having to choose one over the other. Our allegiances are distinct, but they need not be contradictory, and instead be complementary. That is the teaching of our Catholic faith, which obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together.

Freedom is not only for Americans, but we think of it as something of our special inheritance, fought for at a great price, and a heritage to be guarded now. We are entrusted with this gift, not only for ourselves but for all nations and peoples who yearn to be free. Catholics in America have discharged this duty of guarding freedom admirably for many generations.

William Lori of

Christian Legal Society, because it required its leaders to be Christian and to abstain from sexual activity outside of marriage.

- x Catholic foster care and adoption services in Boston, San Francisco, the District of Columbia, and the state of Illinois have driven local Catholic Charities out of the business of providing adoption or foster care services by revoking their licenses, by ending their government contracts, or both because those Charities refuse to place children with same-sex couples or unmarried opposite-sex couples who cohabit.
- x Discrimination against small church congregations in New York City enacted a rule that barred the Bronx Household of Faith and sixty other churches from renting public schools on weekends for worship services even though other religious groups could rent the same schools for scores of other uses. While this would not frequently affect Catholic parishes, which generally own their own buildings, it would be devastating to many smaller congregations. It is a simple case of discrimination against religious believers.
- x Discrimination against Catholic humanitarian services notwithstanding years of H[FHOOHQW SHUIRUPDQFH E\ WKH 8QLWHG 6WHUWHV & R C and Refugee Services in administering contract services for victims of human trafficking, the federal government changed its contract specifications to require us to provide or refer for contraceptive and abortion services in violation of Catholic teaching. Religious institutions should not be disqualified from a government contract based on religious belief, and they do not somehow lose their religious identity or liberty upon entering such contracts. And yet a federal court in Massachusetts, turning religious liberty on its head, has since declared that such a disqualification is required by the First Amendment that the government somehow violates religious liberty by allowing Catholic organizations to participate in contracts in a manner consistent with their beliefs on contraception and abortion.

Religious Liberty Is More Than Freedom of Worship

Religious liberty is not only about our ability to go to Mass on Sunday or pray the Rosary at home. It is about whether we can make our contribution to the common good of all Americans. Can we do the good works our faith calls us to do, without having to compromise that very same faith? Without religious liberty properly understood, all Americans suffer, deprived of the essential contribution in education, health care, feeding the hungry, civil rights, and social services that religious Americans make every day, both here at home and overseas.

What is at stake is whether America will continue to have a free, creative, and robust civil society² or whether the state alone will determine who gets to contribute to the common good,

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essential condition of a free and democratic society. James Madison, often called the Father of
the Constitution, described conscien

That is our American heritage, our most cherished freedom. It is the first freedom because if we are not free in our conscience and our practice of religion, all other freedoms are fragile. If citizens are not free in their own consciences, how can they be free in relation to others, or to the state? If our obligations and duties to God are impeded, or even worse, contradicted by the government, then we can no longer claim to be a land of the free, and a beacon of hope for the world.

Our Christian Teaching

During the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, Americans shone the light of the Gospel on a dark history of slavery, segregation, and racial bigotry. The civil rights movement was an essentially religious movement, a call to awaken consciences, not only an appeal to the Constitution for America to honor its heritage of liberty.

the full measure of that freedom was the specific contribution Christians are obliged to make. He rooted his legal and constitutional arguments about justice in the long Christian tradition:

difference between the two? How does one determine when a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of Saint Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law.¹¹

It is a sobering thing to contemplate our government enacting unjust law. An unjust law cannot be obeyed. In the face of an unjust law, an accommodation is not to be sought, especially by resorting to equivocal words and deceptive practices. If we face today the prospect of unjust laws, then Catholics in America, solidarity with our fellow citizens, must have the courage not to obey them. No American desires this. No Catholic welcomes it. But if it should fall upon us, we must discharge it as a duty of citizenship and an obligation of faith.

The Christian church does not ask for special treatment, simply the rights of religious freedom for all citizens. Rev. King also explained that the church is neither the master nor the servant of the state, but its conscience, guide, and critic.

As Catholics, we know that our history has shadows too in terms of religious liberty, when we did not extend to others the proper respect for this first freedom. Beating of the Church is absolutely clear about religious liberty:

The human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, such wise that in matters religious no one is to be forced to act in a association with others, within due limits. . . . This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognized in the constitutional law whereby society is governed. Thus it is to become a civil right.¹²

As Catholics, we are obliged to defend the right to religious liberty for ourselves and for others. We are happily joined in this by fellow Christians and believers of other faiths.

A recent letter to President Obama from some sixty religious leaders, including & KULVWLDQV RI PDQ\ GHQRPLQDWLRQV DQG -HZV DUJXHGV who deeply object to the requirement that health plans they purchase must provide coverage of FRQWUDFHSWLYHV WKDW LQF¹³XGH VRPH WKDW DUH DERUW

More comprehensively, a theologically rich and politically prudent declaration from Evangelicals and Catholics Together made a plea¹⁴ for greater vigilance in defense of religious freedom, precisely as a united witness animated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. GHFODUDWLRQ PDNHV LW FOHDU WKDW DV &KULVWLDQV RI VTXDUH ' VUHLISJLIRXVR I` €h 8>4<6 0 0 1 720.S3 12 Tf DC BT 1 0 0 1 s04C00520 0.0

A Fortnight for Freedom

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FRPPXQLW\ FDQ PXVW by this coming summer. As pastors of the flock, our
privileged task is to lead the Christian faithful in prayer.

Both our civil year and liturgical year point us on various occasions to our heritage of
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dioceses might arrange special events to highlight the importance of defending our first freedom.
Our Catholic institutions also could be encouraged to do the same, especially in cooperation with
other Christians, Jews, people of other faiths, and indeed, all who wish to defend our most
cherished freedom.

We suggest that the fourteen days from June 24, the vigil of the Feasts of St. John Fisher
and St. Thomas More, WR - X O \ , Q G H S H Q G H Q F H ' D n i g h t E d n G H G L F D W H G
IUHHGRP a great hymn of prayer for our country. Our liturgical calendar celebrates a series of
great martyrs who remained faithful in the face of persecution by political power: St. John
Fisher and St. Thomas More, St. John the Baptist, St. Paul, and the First Martyrs of
the Church of Rome. Culminating on Independence Day, this special period of prayer, study,
catechesis, and public action would emphasize both our Christian and American heritage of
liberty. Dioceses and parishes around the country could choose a date in that period for special
events that would constitute a great national campaign of teaching and witness for religious
liberty.

, Q D G G L W L R Q WR W K L V V X P P H U ¶ V R E V H U Y D Q F H Z H D O V
King² a feast born out of resistance to totalitarian incursions against religious liberty, a day
specifically employed by bishops and priests to preach about religious liberty, both here and
abroad.

To all our fellow Catholics, we urge an intensification of your prayers and fasting for a
new birth of freedom in our beloved country. We invite you to join us in an urgent prayer for
religious liberty.

Almighty God, Father of all nations,
For freedom you have set us free in Christ Jesus (Gal 5:1).
We praise and bless you for the gift of religious liberty,
the foundation of human rights, justice, and the common good.
Grant to our leaders the wisdom to protect and promote our liberties;
By your grace may we have the courage to defend them, for ourselves and for all to live
in this blessed land.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, our patroness,

and in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

Most Rev. John O. Barres, Bishop of Allentown
Most Rev. Daniel E. Flores, Bishop of Brownsville
Most Rev. Thomas J. Olmsted, Bishop of Phoenix
Most Rev. Thomas J. Paprocki, Bishop of Springfield, IL

Bishop Consultants

Most Rev. José H. Gomez, Archbishop of Los Angeles
Most Rev. Stephen E. Blaire, Bishop of Stockton
Most Rev. Joseph P. McFadden, Bishop of Harrisburg
Most Rev. Richard E. Patesis, Bishop of Des Moines
Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Wayne-South Bend



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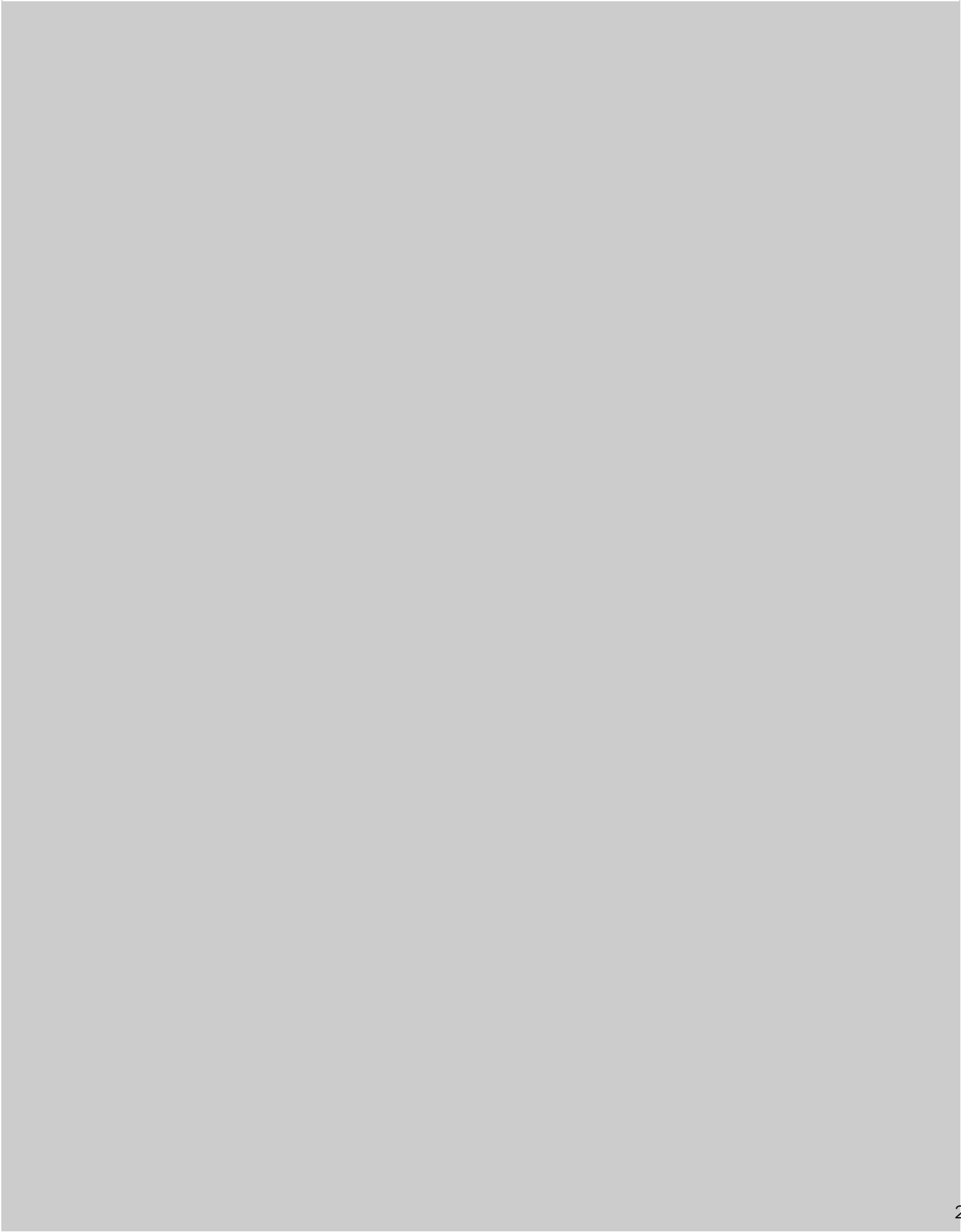


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