

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) congratulates the Illinois bishops, the Catholic Conference of Illinois, Catholic Mobilizing Network, and all dedicated advocates for their work to bring about the repeal of the death penalty in Illinois.

"These advocates have worked tirelessly to ensure that Illinois joins the growing momentum to turn away from the use of the death penalty in our country," said Kathy Saile, director of the Office of Domestic Social Development at the USCCB. With the signing of this legislation, Illinois becomes the sixteenth state in the nation to abolish the death penalty.

As Bishop Stephen E. Blaire, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, stated in his recent letter to Governor Quinn, the passage of this legislation helps "to begin building a culture of life in our country." Pope Benedict XVI, like his predecessor John Paul II, has called for the end of the use of the death penalty. As Catholics we are dedicated to promoting a consistent ethic of life which values all human life as full of dignity and inherent worth.

We applaud Governor Quinn for his courageous decision to abolish the use of the death penalty in Illinois. We stand in solidarity with all those who work for a just and safe society that protects its citizens and upholds the sanctity and dignity of all human life.