



Massachusetts Catholic Conference
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Roman Catholic Bishops of Massachusetts

Statement Regarding House Budget Amendment Expanding Abortion Access

The Catholic Church teaches that life itself starts at conception and ends with natural death.

The Massachusetts state legislature is currently debating the annual budget to fund state government for the balance of the fiscal year. As part of that process many amendments are filed for consideration. House amendment number 759 will be considered by the full House in the coming days. This amendment would expand abortion access in the Commonwealth well beyond what is enshrined in state law.

While we acknowledge the amendment addresses some concerns that were raised about the deeply troubling provisions of the ROE legislation, the fact remains that abortion would remain an option under certain circumstances for the full term of the pregnancy. That fact alone is in direct conflict with Catholic teaching and must be opposed.

In addition, current law requires a young woman under the age of 18 years old to gain the consent of a parent, guardian or the court to have an abortion. The amendment under consideration would decrease the age of consent to 16 years old. In its simplest terms, a 16 or 17 year old girl would be deprived of the guidance and support of an adult at the time of making this life changing decision.

Finally, although life-supporting equipment would be required to be in the room for abortions performed after 24 weeks, the specific language in the amendment is nuanced enough that the physician would not be required to use the equipment. Specifically, it would “enable” the physician performing the abortion to take appropriate steps, in keeping with good medical practice...to preserve the life and health of a live birth and the patient.

For these reasons we urge the full House of Representatives not to pass amendment number 759.

His Eminence Seán P. O'Malley, OFM, Cap.
Archbishop of Boston

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, SDV
Bishop of Fall River

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