

Statement of the Missouri Catholic Conference on Amendment 3 (Constitutional Right to Abortion)

We, the Catholic Bishops of Missouri, are committed to protecting the sanctity of human life in every circumstance and every stage of development. In Missouri, the dignity of life in its earliest stages is being threatened by Amendment 3, which will appear on Missouri's November 2024 ballot. This proposed amendment to our state constitution is an extreme proposal that would allow full-term abortion with no protections for the preborn child, including when the child is capable of feeling pain.

The proposed amendment would effectively eliminate common-sense state regulations that have protected Missouri women for years. These include health and safety requirements for abortion clinics; the requirement that only a medical doctor be allowed to perform abortions in the state; and that parents of a minor be notified before she can have an abortion.

Amendment 3 would allow for unregulated abortions until viability—approximately six months into a pregnancy. After viability, the proposed amendment would create a broad mental health exception that a healthcare provider could exploit to allow abortion in the 7th, 8th, or 9th months of pregnancy.

Amendment 3 would also prohibit any type of penalty for someone who assists a person in “exercising their right to reproductive freedom”. This broad protection would prohibit women and families from suing an abortion provider who harms them.

The legalization and deregulation of abortion would represent a tragic step backward in our work to protect all human life at all stages. For these reasons, we urge Catholics and all persons of good will to oppose Amendment 3.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF MISSOURI



+ Mitchell T. Rozanski

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Approved October 14, 2024

Statement of the Missouri Catholic Conference on the Abortion Initiative Petition

The Catholic Church supports and defends society's most vulnerable, especially women and children, through accompaniment, social services, and material assistance.

A misleading proposed amendment to the Missouri Constitution suggests that a "right to an abortion" is needed to protect women, while the amendment could actually put women at risk and endanger preborn children. This ballot initiative would legalize abortions in this state and remove long standing health and safety standards for women. In addition, this initiative does nothing to reduce or eliminate the underlying social causes for abortion and does not further a true culture of life in the state.

Groups are currently collecting citizen signatures to add the amendment to the November 2024 ballot. **We encourage all Catholics and people of good will to not sign any petition that would put this amendment on the ballot.**

The Catholic Church in Missouri will continue to provide spiritual and material support to expectant mothers and their families through our parishes and ministries, and to advocate on their behalf and on behalf of their preborn children. For those women suffering from the pain of an abortion, the Church will continue to offer true healing and hope through its Post Abortive Healing Ministries. We ask all to help us in these efforts to safeguard the right to life.

We look forward to the day when every child, born and unborn, has the love and support needed to thrive and reach his or her full potential. Let us pray for a greater recognition of the gift of each and every human life in our society.

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Missouri Bishops Encourage Missourians to Safeguard Sanctity of Human Life

December 11, 2023, JEFFERSON CITY, MO - We, the Catholic Bishops of Missouri, are committed to promoting the sanctity of human life in every circumstance, from conception until natural death. In Missouri, the dignity of life in its earliest stages is being threatened by proposed amendments to the state constitution that would remove legal protections for women and preborn children.

Though several initiatives are being contemplated and none have yet to be finalized for the November 2024 ballot, we encourage all Catholics and people of good will to safeguard as much as possible the fundamental principle of the right to life. We also support efforts that seek to reduce or eliminate the underlying social causes for abortion by expanding care and resources available to mothers. Even with legal protections for the unborn, as we have in our state today, more can still be done to build a culture of life.

The Missouri Catholic Conference will continue to collaborate with diocesan pro-life offices and with other pro-life groups to protect the health and safety of women and their children. As we stated after Roe v. Wade was overturned, the Catholic Church stands ready to continue providing spiritual and material support to expectant mothers and their families through our parishes and ministries, and to advocate on their behalf and on behalf of their unborn children at the state and federal levels. We look forward to the day when every child, born and unborn, has the love and support needed to thrive and reach his or her full potential. Let us pray for a greater recognition of the gift of each and every human life in our society.

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