

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.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF MISSOURI



+ *Mitchell T. Rozanski*

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski
General Chairman
Archbishop of St. Louis



+ *James V. Johnston, Jr.*

Most Reverend James V. Johnston, Jr.
Vice Chairman
Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph



+ *Shawn McKnight*

Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight
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+ *Edward M. Rice*

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Approved February 22, 2024

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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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