



Massachusetts Catholic Conference  
66 Brooks Drive  
Braintree, MA 02184  
617-746-5630  
www.macatholic.org

***Roman Catholic Bishops of Massachusetts***

***Statement Regarding Senate Budget Amendment Expanding Abortion Access***

**November 16, 2020**

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

Last week, as part of the annual fiscal year state budget process, the Massachusetts House of Representatives passed amendment number 759.1. We are concerned that the amendment, if enacted, would expand abortion access in the Commonwealth well beyond what is currently in state law. We are also concerned that the amendment is an effort to expand abortion in Massachusetts by taking advantage of the process of approving a budget for the Commonwealth.

Tomorrow, the budget debate will move from the House to the Massachusetts Senate. Regrettably, the Senate amendment (No. 180) closely mirrors the version that was passed in the House last week. In fact, it would also allow abortions to be performed under certain circumstances for the full term of the pregnancy. Abortion at any time, from the moment of conception to birth, is in direct conflict with Catholic teaching and must be opposed.

Today, we feel compelled to restate additional objections that were raised in our initial Statement. Specifically, 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 Senate not to pass amendment number 180.

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