

Wisconsin Catholic Conference: Urges legislators to embrace them both

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The Wisconsin Catholic Conference encourages all legislators to support the Embrace Them Both package circulated today, legislation that will support and protect the life and health of Wisconsin's women and children. The package of bills strengthens Wisconsin's public commitment to ensuring that all can thrive in our state, regardless of age or wealth. We thank Senator Romaine Quinn, and Representatives Gae Magnafici, Amanda Nedweski, Donna Rozar, and Patrick Snyder for their vision and urge bipartisan support for this important legislation.

Every human life is sacred, unrepeatable, and deserves protection. Following the overturning of Roe v. Wade, it is all the more imperative for a woman to know that the community supports her and her child. A society that truly respects human life must take active measures to ensure that pro-woman, pro-child, and pro-family policies are enacted into law. This means caring for a mother and child and acknowledging that there are significant financial costs involved at all stages of pregnancy and parenting.

An abortion, or the intentional killing of an unborn child, is never medically necessary to save the life of a mother. LRB-2792 clarifies that a medical procedure designed to prevent the death of a pregnant woman, such as the removal of a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy, is not an abortion. In rare instances, a medical procedure that saves a mother's life has the unintended consequence of leading to a birth in which the child does not survive. In those cases, every effort is still made to save the child's life, even though the child's death may be an unintended consequence of the intervention. When the death of a newborn is imminent, perinatal hospice and palliative care provide families with a nonviolent way to care

for their child and grieve a premature death. Catholic hospitals have led the way in caring for women and children in these very complicated cases and know how to care for both.

As costs continue to climb, Wisconsin must take steps to support the economic well-being of families. LRB-2486 increases the dollar amount taxpayers can claim as an exemption for every dependent from \$700 to \$1000 and extends that coverage not only to children aged 0-17, but also to unborn children. For the many families willing and eager to adopt, the cost of adoption is often a barrier. For this reason, LRB-2918 creates an Adoption Financial Assistance Grant Program to make adoption a more affordable option for all Wisconsin families, funded at \$5,000,000.

For decades, Pregnancy Resource Centers (PRCs) have been on the ground helping to immediately respond to women's individual needs. LRB-2445 funds PRCs with a dedicated grant of \$1,000,000 per year. A state that is committed to the welfare of women and children should assist these organizations that provide everything from material goods, parenting classes, and housing assistance. These organizations tailor their response to the needs of each woman and help ensure that no woman is left to shoulder her burdens alone.

This is just the beginning. Much more needs to be done. This can and should also include expanding postpartum care, reducing costs for birth, eliminating racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality, supporting birth mothers, and more. Together, let us build an economy and society in Wisconsin where women and children can live safely and readily access the resources they need to thrive.