

New Mexico Conference of Catholic Bishops



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NEWS RELEASE **New Mexico Conference of Catholic Bishops** **Oppose HB7**

ALBUQUERQUE – Tuesday, February 7, 2023 – IMMEDIATE RELEASE – – In these weeks before Lent, we are reading from the Book of Genesis at Mass. "In the beginning," we hear God created all things (Gen. 1). At the pinnacle of creation on the sixth day, God created man and woman in His image, and they were charged with passing on the great gift of life to children. As God gazed upon His handiwork, "He found it very good" (Gen. 2). These simple phrases remind us that all of creation is full of divine dignity—a dignity which in recent days has not only been forgotten but even opposed, as is evidenced in our very own state by the recent approval of HB 7 by the House Health and Human Services Committee.

Untruthfully called the "Reproductive and Gender-Affirming Health Care Freedom Act," this bill is neither about health care nor about freedom, for it denies essential truths about God's plan for humanity and seeks to supplant God's vision with the lies and shackles of the Evil One. If there are those who think we are exaggerating, just read the front page of today's Albuquerque Journal (February 7, 2023). The last thing we need in our state is a Satanic temple from Massachusetts to offer free "reproductive health" services (read abortion). We shudder to think what the "Religious Abortion Ritual" that they require is all about. More specifically, it will force school teachers to facilitate abortions and even promote transgender surgeries among school children. It is, in fact, the most radical bill of its kind in the nation and continues New Mexico's penchant for rejecting the most vulnerable and weak among us. We cannot help but think of these words of Pope Francis: "Every child who, rather than being born, is condemned unjustly to being aborted, bears the face of Jesus Christ, bears the face of the Lord, who even before he was born, and then just after birth, experienced the world's rejection."

We Catholic bishops of New Mexico are charged by Jesus Christ to proclaim His Gospel, a Gospel that speaks of salvation and reconciliation, of peace and life. We plead with our fellow citizens to turn from abortion and embrace the sanctity of all human life, from conception to natural death. There are moments when it appears the State of New Mexico understands how precious life is, including human life in the womb. Just a month or so ago, an individual was sentenced to prison for first-degree murder in the shooting of his pregnant girlfriend and the killing of her baby (she survived). How is it possible that in the same state, that same baby could have been aborted up to the time of birth without any thought of murder or the taking of a human life?

Our Savior, Jesus Christ, came that we might have eternal life (cf. Jn. 3:16, 10:10). It is His salvific and life-giving Gospel which saves us not only from sin and death but also from the deceptions this world so often offers. He and He alone can bring true fulfillment to our humanity. We, the Catholic Bishops of New Mexico, want to encourage all the faithful of the State of New Mexico, and indeed all men and women of goodwill, to continue to pray and work for a complete end to abortion in our state and in our nation, and for a thorough conversion of hearts to the Gospel of Life. This coming Lent once again offers us the opportunity to do so as we engage more fervently in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Let us take this yearly season of grace to implore divine assistance as we fight for life, for truth, and, ultimately, for God's will to be done "on earth as it is in heaven."

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