



FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

The nonpartisan public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Florida

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Abortion Amendment to Florida's Constitution

Vote 'No' on Amendment 4

Pulpit Announcement

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The Church plays a role in the promotion and attainment of justice and protection of the common good. As faithful citizens, we are called to participate in public life and to apply Gospel values to our political activities. Our actions in the public square must reflect the values of our faith and demonstrate a fundamental belief in the dignity of every person and the sacredness of all human life.

A proposed amendment to our state constitution that seeks to legalize abortion through the third trimester will appear on the November 2024 ballot. While Catholic opposition to abortion is well known, even our friends and neighbors who would tolerate abortion to some degree are finding the proposed amendment too extreme and even deceptive. Let me explain a few key components of the Amendment:

- This amendment was cleverly worded to hide the fact that it would eliminate current laws and common-sense safety regulations for abortions that most people on both sides of this issue support. For example, while the amendment allows for parental *notification* before a daughter undergoes an abortion, it would eliminate the current law that *requires* parental *consent*, making this the only medical decision for which parents have no say.
- The amendment explicitly allows abortion until the preborn child is viable, which is at about 22-24 weeks, or 6 months, of pregnancy. It then provides a loophole to allow "health care providers," which under Florida law do not have to be doctors, to justify practically any abortion after that point. Even employees of abortion clinics who are not doctors would be able to approve late-term abortions.
- Unlike other proposed constitutional amendments, the text of the amendment does not define key terms like "government interference," "viability," "patient's health" and "health care provider." Without these definitions, the amendment, if passed, will cause countless lawsuits and years of legal uncertainty.

The bishops of Florida have urged all Floridians to pray for protections for the preborn and mothers in need, and to stand against the legalization of late-term abortion by voting 'no' on Amendment 4.