

To: Senate Health and Pensions Committee
From: Missouri Catholic Conference
Re: Opposition to SB 391 Abolition of Abortion in Missouri Act
Date: March 25, 2021

Recently, the Senate Health and Pensions Committee heard testimony on Senate Bill 391, the so-called “Abolition of Abortion in Missouri Act”. While we appreciate the intent of the bill sponsor to protect unborn life in Missouri, we are concerned that this bill is not legally sustainable and puts at risk the many incremental pro-life laws the Missouri General Assembly has passed over the years. These laws have had the effect of lowering the number of abortions in this state from just over 20,000 in 1984 to 39 abortions from January 1 through November 15, 2020. These incremental laws – such as informed consent provisions, abortion facility inspections and licensure requirements, a 72-hour waiting period, a partial-birth abortion ban, a ban on abortions performed at 8, 14, 18, and 20 weeks and upon viability, parental consent and notification for minors to obtain an abortion, a ban on telemedicine abortions, a ban on the use of public funds and public facilities to perform abortions, and a “trigger ban” prohibiting abortion if *Roe* is ever overturned, among other pro-life provisions – would all be immediately repealed if SB 391 is passed.

In addition, SB 391 would harm the very women who need our assistance during a crisis pregnancy. This is because the proposed bill would repeal Missouri’s Alternatives to Abortion program, which helps provide pregnant women adoption assistance, domestic abuse prevention services, educational opportunities, job training, and drug and alcohol treatment, among other services. Most disturbingly, SB 391 would subject a woman who has an abortion to prosecution and potential imprisonment.

While the MCC looks forward to the day when abortion is unthinkable in Missouri, the MCC cannot support SB 391, and respectfully asks the committee to vote the bill “DO NOT PASS”.

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