

## Statement of the Missouri Catholic Conference on Amendment 3 (Constitutional Right to Abortion)

We, the Catholic Bishops of Missouri, are committed to protecting the sanctity of human life in every circumstance and every stage of development. In Missouri, the dignity of life in its earliest stages is being threatened by Amendment 3, which will appear on Missouri's November 2024 ballot. This proposed amendment to our state constitution is an extreme proposal that would allow full-term abortion with no protections for the preborn child, including when the child is capable of feeling pain.

The proposed amendment would effectively eliminate common-sense state regulations that have protected Missouri women for years. These include health and safety requirements for abortion clinics; the requirement that only a medical doctor be allowed to perform abortions in the state; and that parents of a minor be notified before she can have an abortion.

Amendment 3 would allow for unregulated abortions until viability—approximately six months into a pregnancy. After viability, the proposed amendment would create a broad mental health exception that a healthcare provider could exploit to allow abortion in the 7th, 8th, or 9th months of pregnancy.

Amendment 3 would also prohibit any type of penalty for someone who assists a person in “exercising their right to reproductive freedom”. This broad protection would prohibit women and families from suing an abortion provider who harms them.

The legalization and deregulation of abortion would represent a tragic step backward in our work to protect all human life at all stages. For these reasons, we urge Catholics and all persons of good will to oppose Amendment 3.

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