ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

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To all people of goodwill in Colorado:

I am writing to you today with a very important request. Weekends are busy for all of us, but I am asking you, as a believer in the sanctity of human life, to pray for 10 minutes and take one of the actions that I will mention at the conclusion of this letter.

If you haven't yet heard, there is a very troubling bill being debated in the Colorado State Senate next week. Senate Bill 175, touted as the "Reproductive Health Freedom Act," passed on a party line vote in committee this past Thursday. I am grateful to every person who showed up to oppose the radical bill.

This over-reaching piece of legislation would essentially shut down any attempt to pass life-affirming legislation in Colorado ever again. More than that, it enshrines the "right to abortion" into Colorado law. It's being praised by anti-life organizations such as NARAL and ThinkProgress as "the first of its kind" in the country and "ambitious." It enshrines the culture of death into law and ignores science.

This bill would prevent lawmakers from enacting laws such as ultrasound requirements, which we all know—particularly from the work of the Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Initiative here in Colorado—have done so much to give mothers vital information about their pregnancy, and thus save countless children from imminent death.

It prevents common-sense regulations like waiting periods, restrictions on abortion pills (particularly for minors), and parental notification policies. Advocates of this bill seek the absolute "right to abortion" for girls as young as 10 or 11 without a parent's knowledge, guidance or advice. Parents are seen as unfit in the moral guidance of their children.

Pope Francis affirmed on April 11, support for parents to decide their children's moral and religious education, while he rejected "any kind of educational experimentation with children."

He further stated, "The horrors of the manipulation of education that we experienced in the great genocidal dictatorships of the 20th century have not disappeared; they have retained a current relevance under various guises and proposals and, with the pretense of modernity, push children and young people to walk on the dictatorial path of 'only one form of thought.'"

This bill would protect the "only one form of thought" that Pope Francis warns against and undermine the freedom of one's conscience to promote the dignity of human life and the unborn child.

Finally, this bill would eliminate abortion clinic health code regulations, which pro-abortion advocates label as "burdensome." Remember Kermit Gosnell in Philadelphia, and the horrific images and stories of women dying on the abortionist's table? That is what an unregulated abortion clinic looks like! This bill is not good for the women and girls of Colorado!

I am prayerfully asking every person of good will to spend 10 minutes this weekend in prayer. Plead to Our Lord

*(over)*

for His intercession on behalf of life in Colorado. Also, pray for our politicians on both sides of this issue, particularly for those who work tirelessly and often without recognition to promote life-affirming legislation in our State Capitol. Pray for the conversion of the heart and mind of those who support such irrational, unscientific, and a denial of conscience legislation.

But don't stop there. As a conclusion of your prayer, ask Our Lord what action he wants from you. You are called to be a leaven for good and for life in society.

**Here are some concrete actions you can take this weekend:**

Contact your Senator. It would be a beautiful testimony on the part of the people of Colorado who support life if each senator in Colorado would wake up on Monday morning with hundreds of emails asking them to oppose SB175.

Please contact the Colorado Catholic Conference to learn more about this bill or to get contact information for your Senator. Call 303-894-8808 or visit their website: www.cocatholicconference.org.

Contact the media. Call your newspaper, your television station and your radio station. Ask them to cover this bill. Let them know that they are letting down the people of Colorado by allowing this bill to pass without a true public debate!

Spread the word. If you have a blog, or are active on Facebook, Twitter or one of the other social networks, spread the word! Invite others who may not have received this letter to pray and act!

Be people of hope! Many of you have lost faith in politics, but remember that attitude is not of God and is of the evil one. The devil confuses people and discourages them. Pope Francis in his April 11 daily homily reminded us, "The devil is here…even in the 21st century! And we mustn't be naïve, right? We must learn from the Gospel how to fight against Satan."

Christians are a people of hope! No action taken in defense of life is meaningless, particularly if it comes from a place of prayer and the Gospel.

I leave you with some thoughts on the importance of Christian witness in our times. Remember that Vatican II called every Catholic to serve as leaven in society and "work for the sanctification of the world from within."

"Since they are tightly bound up in all types of temporal affairs," the document Lumen Gentium states, "it is their [the laity's] special task to order and to throw light upon these affairs in such a way that they may … continually increase according to Christ to the praise of the Creator and the Redeemer" (LG, 31).

My brother bishops and I have sent a joint letter to all Colorado Senators, now I ask you all to do your part to sanctify society. Together we can make a stand for life here in Colorado!

May God bless each one of you abundantly!

+ Samuel J. Aquila

Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila
Archbishop of Denver