



Diocese of Helena



Diocese of Great Falls-Billings

May 3, 2024

A Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Montana on the Abortion Amendment Constitutional Initiative (CI-128)

Dear People of God,

As Catholics, we treasure life as a precious gift from God and recognize our sacred duty to nurture and protect every human life from the moment of conception through natural death. Created in the image of God with a dignity not of our own making, each person is a unique and unrepeatable masterpiece of God's creation. This recognition of the infinite dignity enjoyed by all persons informs our understanding of the basic rights and protections to which all human beings are entitled. When those rights are threatened, the Church must speak up with clarity and boldness.

At this very moment, there is a coordinated effort underway to gather signatures to place an extreme amendment to our State's constitution on the November ballot. Constitutional Initiative 128 (CI-128) would greatly expand the practice of legalized abortion in Montana abolishing the limited restrictions currently in place and opening the door to a host of practices that violate fundamental rights to life and dignity.

CI-128 is being promoted simply as a protection for women's rights, when in fact, this initiative seeks to enshrine legal authorization for the following:

- Late-term abortion of babies who will feel pain
- Abortion of babies who have been partially delivered
- Abortion by dismemberment of children growing in the womb

Moreover, this proposal would eliminate current parental notification requirements that apply when minors obtain an abortion. This would:

- Impose a culture of secrecy that would undermine families.
- Expose underage mothers to exploitation
- Provide cover for those who would victimize underage women by committing abuse, human trafficking, and other crimes

Faced with this unprecedented threat to human life, we urge all people of goodwill to decline to sign the petition to place this dangerous amendment on our ballot. Trusting in God, we invite all Montanans to pray for the defeat of this Constitutional Initiative and stand in defense of women, children and all those threatened by this extreme proposal.

May Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the unborn, pray for us.
In Christ,

Most Rev. Austin A. Vetter
Bishop of Helena

Most Rev. Jeffrey M. Fleming
Bishop of Great Falls-Billings

Most Rev. Michael W. Warfel
Bishop Emeritus of Great Falls-Billings