ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

With this letter I write to you about a development that should disturb us greatly, both as citizens and as disciples of Jesus, the Lord of life.

Recently, two bills have been introduced in the Illinois House and Senate. The first, House Bill 2495 and Senate Bill 1942, both identical pieces of legislation, seeks to strip unborn persons of any protection – or even consideration – under the law and declare abortion to be a "fundamental right" and matter of health care. The end result is that an abortion could be obtained at any stage of pregnancy, including late term, for any reason and without any regulation. The law would no longer guarantee any modicum of humanity or compassion for any unborn person in Illinois, even if they are partially born. This legislation also repeals the Abortion Performance Refusal Act, which protects doctors, nurses and hospitals who refuse to permit, recommend, perform or assist in abortion. In so doing, rights of conscience, especially religious objections, will be lost.

The second piece of legislation House Bill 2467 and its identical Senate Bill 1594, repeals the Illinois Parental Notice of Abortion Act. This law, upheld unanimously by the Illinois Supreme Court just six years ago, has the common-sense purpose of ensuring that parents would be part of the life-altering decision of their minor child in the case she seeks an abortion. This effective law has reduced abortions performed on minors by fifty-seven percent.

As citizens of a state and people of faith who care about the common good, I urge you to join me and my brother bishops in an effort to defeat this radical departure from current law and practice in our state. Please reach out your State Representative and Senator to urge defeat of these bills. You can find the name of your appropriate politicians and their contact information at https://www.ilcatholic.org/take-action/action-center/. To find out more about these bills, please consult the Catholic Conference of Illinois website, www.ilcatholic.org, or call the Office of Human Dignity and Solidarity at 312-534-5355 for further information.

Entrusting our efforts for all life, from the moment of conception until natural death, to the care of our Blessed Mother, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop of Chicago