



New York State Catholic Conference

THE OFFICIAL PUBLIC POLICY VOICE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE EMPIRE STATE

DENNIS POUST, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 29, 2021

Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Schumer:

As the Bishops of the eight Catholic dioceses of the State of New York, we write to express our unified and staunch opposition to S1975/HR3755, the “Women’s Health Protection Act,” a piece of legislation that would impose upon the entire nation a policy of unrestricted abortion on demand, for any reason, at any point in pregnancy, going well beyond the parameters of *Roe v. Wade* and subsequent Supreme Court decisions.

We are under no illusions. We know that on the matter of abortion policy, our views are radically disparate from yours. Nevertheless, we believe we have an obligation to speak out as a voice for the unborn, as well as for pregnant mothers who deserve so much more than this bill offers them. This legislation sends a message to women that abortion is their only option and their best hope, that it is something to be promoted and celebrated.

The truth is that abortion is something to be mourned, and it is often the most agonizing decision a woman will ever make. We believe our government should be offering pregnant women all of their options and the support services they need to empower them to choose to carry their babies to term, raise their families with dignity, or offer their child to a home which can appropriately and lovingly care for that child. Our public policies should reflect these priorities.

Here in New York State, our state legislature enacted the “Reproductive Health Act” in 2019, enshrining in state statute a policy of unlimited abortion on demand throughout nine months of pregnancy. We expressed our profound opposition at the time, and we continue to grieve for the mothers and infants harmed by this law.

But a majority of states in this great country have enacted laws to the contrary: policies to allow parents to be notified when their minor daughter is considering abortion; to provide informed consent to pregnant women; to prohibit state taxpayer funding of abortion; to require health and safety regulations in clinics; to require licensure and certification of abortion providers. All of

these policies are allowable under *Roe* and subsequent cases. Yet all such policies would be invalidated in one fell swoop by Congressional passage of S1975. This authoritarian federal overreach undermines the will of the people through their elected state representatives, and does not bode well for our democracy.

Moreover, S1975 may very well nullify New York's strong Civil Rights Law protection for health care professionals who do not wish to be involved in abortion, a law which so many rely upon to exercise their moral values and religious freedom. Is this how we want to repay our heroic health care workers who have served so valiantly throughout the ongoing pandemic?

In closing, we strongly urge you to reject this legislation and work to protect and strengthen the fundamental human rights of mothers and children.

Very Truly Yours,

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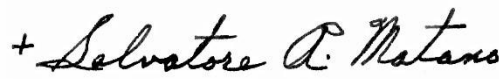
Timothy Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York

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Most Rev. Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

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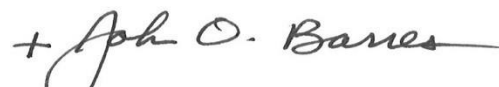
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Bishop of Albany

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Most Rev. Salvatore R. Matano
Bishop of Rochester

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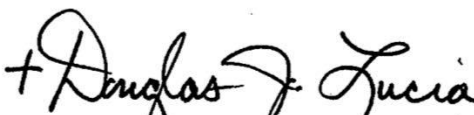
Most Rev. Nicholas DiMarzio
Bishop of Brooklyn

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Most Rev. John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre

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Most Rev. Michael W. Fisher
Bishop of Buffalo

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Most Rev. Douglas J. Lucia
Bishop of Syracuse



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THE OFFICIAL PUBLIC POLICY VOICE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE EMPIRE STATE

DENNIS POUST, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 29, 2021

Honorable Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senate
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

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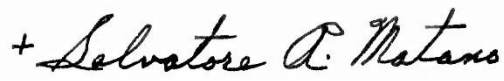
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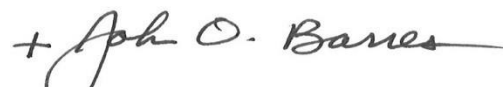
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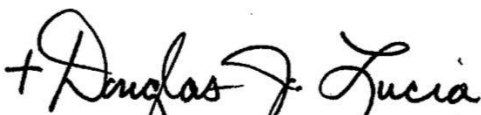
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