

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

Interested Party Testimony HB 125

December 13, 2011

Thank you, Chairman Oelslager, Ranking Minority Member, Brown and members of the Senate Health committee. My name is Jim Tobin. I am an Associate Director with the Catholic Conference of Ohio. I am testifying as an interested party.

The Catholic Conference of Ohio strongly supports the intent of HB 125. We want our laws to provide maximum protection for unborn persons. We have consulted with experts at both the national and state level regarding this legislation. Their conclusion was that the U.S. Supreme Court would, in all likelihood, find this current version of the bill to be unconstitutional. They, too, raised the possibility that an unfavorable Court decision on this bill could provide a setback to the prolife movement.

We believe that HB 125 involves prudential decision-making - difficult prudential decision-making. This means that well-intentioned persons can differ over specific legislative and legal ways to best protect unborn life. As such, we strongly encourage each of you to continue working on ways to resolve current differences over specific language and constitutional concerns. We believe that passage of legislation that can be upheld by the Court is in the best interest of protecting human life at this time.

Perhaps there are aspects of this bill that can be pursued in separate legislation? There appears to be some agreement among legal experts that the informed consent concepts within HB 125 are more likely to be found constitutional.

Perhaps there can be changes that will not eviscerate the current bill, but will increase the probability that this bill will be found constitutional? Our fervent hope and prayer is that such consensus can and will be reached.

We continue to work for the day when all human life is protected from conception to natural death.

Thank you for this opportunity.