



STATEMENT ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF OHIO

February 28, 2011

The Ohio General Assembly is currently debating legislation that seeks major changes in collective bargaining laws. The Catholic bishops of Ohio encourage leaders in government, labor, and business to pursue changes that promote the common good without the elimination of collective bargaining. We urge continued good faith in ongoing negotiations. Civility, open communication, mutual cooperation, and peaceful witness should characterize legislative actions and public discourse.

In our faith tradition, defending the human dignity of every person, born and unborn, includes promoting economic justice. This justice places the good of the person at the center of all economic activities. It stresses that the economy exists for the person, not the person for the economy. It challenges society to measure the moral effectiveness of our economic practices by how well they strengthen families and provide for the poor and vulnerable.

This social doctrine has long recognized that all people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions, to organize and join unions or other associations, and to engage in collective bargaining.

At the same time, this doctrine promotes mutual partnerships where both the needs of labor and the needs of management are freely and openly acknowledged and addressed. It challenges both unions and management to work for the common good, to make sacrifices when required, and to adjust to new economic realities.

May God's wisdom and prudence guide all of us on this important justice issue.

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Most Rev. Roger W. Gries
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Most Rev. Frederick F. Campbell
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Most Rev. John Kudrick
Bishop of Byzantine Eparchy of Parma

Most Rev. R. Daniel Conlon
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Most Rev. Leonard P. Blair
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