

Prot N. 2024-0539 AB-A

September 25, 2024

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I write to you today as your Shepherd with a deep concern regarding Amendment 79, which will be on the Colorado State Ballot this fall. As Catholics, we are called to build a culture of life. We believe in the inherent dignity of human life and that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and as a part of God's plan. We are to promote the dignity of human life from the moment of conception to natural death. The gift of the marital act and sharing in God's creation of human beings was a blessing God bestowed on man and woman before the Fall. Sadly, some Catholics today are lured by the voice of the serpent, as Adam and Eve were at the Fall, and support this constitutional amendment creating a so-called 'right' to abortion. Furthermore, we believe that parents are the first teachers of their children in faith and have responsibility for their children until they reach majority age, which this amendment perilously disregards.

Based on our faith in God and these fundamental teachings of Scripture and Tradition, I urge you to vote against Amendment 79, also known as the 'Right to Abortion.' This proposition does three things contrary to the dignity of the human person: it creates a constitutional right to unrestricted abortion for all 40 weeks of pregnancy, eliminates parental notification laws and allows for taxpayer funding for abortions, which is currently prohibited.

Colorado already has some of the strongest pro-abortion 'rights' in the entire world, and this proposition is even more extreme. If we do not defeat this, pro-life legislation will be unable to be passed due to the constitutional right to abortion, and countless children known only to God will die in Colorado because of state-subsidized abortion. To pass, it needs 55 percent of the vote, and recent polling data show that if more Coloradans knew all that this amendment would do, support for the amendment would drop as low as **47 percent** – making the support for the amendment fall below the threshold the pro-abortion lobby needs to win. We have a path to victory.

Coloradans need to know that Amendment 79 creates a constitutional right to abortion and bans any limits on late abortion. Even restrictions on abortions in the ninth month for healthy mothers and healthy babies would be illegal under 79. Data from the pro-abortion Institute for Family Planning shows an increase in late abortions in Colorado since the *Dobbs* decision (2022). It is likely that this amendment would lead to an even greater increase in third-trimester abortions, when the baby can feel pain and survive outside the womb.

It is important to know that not all medical procedures, even some that end in the death of an unborn child, are abortions. Abortion is the **intentional** killing of the preborn child. The pro-abortion lobby abuses heartbroken mothers and families to advance their cause, claiming that medical care after a miscarriage or when an unborn child dies in the womb is equivalent to an abortion. This is false. Abortion is never health care; health care does not seek the death of the child. I would encourage you to research the principle of double effect for a deeper understanding of this important nuance.

Another troubling aspect of this amendment is its ban on parental notification laws. The pro-abortion lobby places words such as “shall not impede” on a ‘right to abortion’ in their amendments intentionally – it means that all laws protecting parental rights are nullified. There is no age restriction on abortion in Colorado, and 79 would prevent parents from being informed if their 15-year-old daughter has an abortion. Parents must have the right to know if their adolescent daughter is being pressured into getting an abortion by their boyfriend or someone in authority such as their coach, teacher, school nurse or counselor.

Third, the amendment would allow for taxpayer funding for abortions without any restrictions or limits. This means that if the amendment passes, the state could mandate taxpayer funding for late abortions for *both* in-state and out-of-state women. Should this amendment pass, the Colorado legislature could allocate millions of dollars annually for abortion as soon as 2025, as though it were simply a mundane budgetary procedure.

Finally, although abortion is wrong on its face and not only because of the long-term consequences, we must ponder the ramifications of one abortion and the difference it makes in our lives and history. Just imagine if one of your grandparents were aborted, who would not be here today? When I considered the outcome, had my grandmother not been born, my mother and seven of my aunts and uncles would not be here, 25 first cousins wouldn’t be here, 26 second cousins would not be here, and so on down the line. Or imagine if Martin Luther King, Jr., had been aborted and how the course of history would have changed with no MLK for the Civil Rights Movement? Do we truly understand the gravity of abortion, or do we think life is just a game of chance with no meaning or purpose?

As a community, we must stand together to protect the most vulnerable among us and ensure that our laws reflect respect for life, parental rights and the truth that life is a gift. Every Catholic is called by God to be pro-life. I urge you to consider this amendment's grave implications and join me in opposing it.

And if, in addition to your vote, you would like to support the campaign against this horrendous amendment, please visit www.RightToKnowCO.org, because Coloradans have a right to know what this damaging amendment will do to generations to come.

Yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila
Archbishop of Denver

To join the campaign against the “Right to Abortion” amendment, please visit this website:
www.RightToKnowCO.com.