

65 East Wacker Place • Suite 1620
Chicago, Illinois 60601
(312) 368-1066
FAX (312) 368-1090



108 East Cook Street
Springfield, Illinois 62704
(217) 528-9200
FAX (217) 528-7214

STATEMENT ON PASSAGE OF SENATE BILL 1716

The Catholic Conference of Illinois (CCI) regrets the General Assembly's passage of Senate Bill 1716. Upon the Governor's signature, this legislation will legalize civil unions and explicitly grant these unions the same status as marriage in state law.

Marriage is not just any relationship between human beings. Marriage has been established by our Creator in harmony with the nature of man and woman and with its own essential properties and purpose. The Church did not invent marriage and neither has any state. No ideology can erase from the human spirit the certainty that marriage exists solely between a man and a woman, who by personal gift, proper and exclusive to themselves, mutually commit to each other in order to cooperate with God in the procreation and upbringing of new human lives.

The legislation also contains the potential for a serious conflict with religious liberty. While the bill states that nothing in the Act should interfere with or regulate the religious practice of any religious body, such language may offer little protection in the context of litigation religious institutions may soon encounter in relation to charitable services, adoption and foster care.

We hope these issues will be seriously evaluated by policy makers in the coming months and that additional conscience protections will be afforded.