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## **Illinois' Catholic Bishops Call on State Senate to Reject "Reproductive Health Act"**

The Illinois Constitution, like that of the United States of America on which it was modeled, promises much. It declares that among the inalienable rights of persons is the right to life and that no person, under its promised equal protection, shall be deprived of this right without due process. By passing Senate Bill 25, members of the Illinois House of Representatives have stripped all unborn human beings, even those viable outside the womb, of their right to be recognized as persons.

We appreciate the complex and difficult challenges facing women who have unplanned pregnancies or who carry babies destined to have short or difficult lives. They deserve all the support society can give them. But to deny that the lives growing within these women is anything other than human or that they would, in the vast majority of cases, develop into healthy children is simply to deny reality. If we are saying that the unwanted are not worthy of life, we are entering an ethical and moral wasteland where other human beings can be denied their due process, their human dignity and their right to life.

How do we build on that bereft moral foundation to decry random violence? How do we align that ethical framework with our rejection of the death penalty?

We urge the members of the Illinois Senate to consider carefully what message a vote for this legislation sends to our people. Upholding the right to life of unborn human beings also upholds the right to life of all people, promised in our Constitution and enshrined in our laws.

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