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## **Illinois House Passes Senate Bill 3539 – Abolition of the Death Penalty January 6, 2011**

Today, the Illinois House of Representatives, by a vote of 60-54, passed Senate Bill 3539, a bill to abolish the death penalty in Illinois. The Catholic Conference of Illinois commends the Illinois House on this historic vote.

With an imperfect justice system, there can be no guarantee that the death penalty will never again be imposed on an innocent life. Continued use of the death penalty weakens respect for the sanctity of life in our society. We must be committed to the value and dignity of human life, from conception to natural death.

In addition, the families and loved ones of victims require our compassion and support, and we must help them heal. This legislation also provides support for much needed services to victims' families.

Senate Bill 3539 now goes to the Illinois Senate. The Catholic Conference of Illinois strongly urges the Illinois Senate to also vote to pass this important legislation.