



Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities

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March 29, 2019

Dear Representative:

As Congress begins its work on Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations you will have many important decisions to make regarding priorities in these annual funding bills. While drafting and voting, I urge you to keep in mind the inalienable rights and dignity of every human being. As Pope Francis has said “Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.” Accordingly, I urge you in the strongest possible terms to use the money and policies in these bills to fund and promote life-affirming policies that help people and not to fund and promote the destruction of innocent human life.

In making this plea, I am joined by millions of Catholics and others of good will who do not view the unborn child as the property of the mother or a “product of conception”, but as an individual person who is greatly loved by God. Likely, many of you are aware of the long-standing prohibitions on taxpayer funding of abortion through the Hyde amendment and other similar amendments to be found in the appropriation bills. These laws have been approved year after year by Congresses and Presidents of both parties. Lawmakers and the people they represent have long agreed that Americans should not be forced to support or participate in abortion against their will, even while disagreeing on the legality and moral status of abortion. Efforts to coerce consciences, shut down pregnancy care centers, require taxpayer funding of abortion, or otherwise to insist that abortion is a good and valid solution, violate any conceivable definition of “choice.” Such coercive efforts disregard not only the unborn child but also the millions of Americans who rightly recognize the unborn child as a subject of human rights.

As you may have seen in recent polling, abortion continues to be a divisive issue in our country with roughly half of the country identifying as “pro-life” and half as “pro-choice.” However, the vast majority have consistently asked for more restrictions on abortion, not less. The Marist poll from February of this year indicated that 80 percent of Americans believe abortion should *never* be legal or *only in the first three months*. This includes more than 60 percent of Democrats and 90 percent of Republicans. In addition, the same poll found that by a double-digit margin, a majority (54 to 39 percent) of Americans oppose taxpayer funding of abortion. Given that it is not only right, but also agrees with the views of a majority of voters, we must work to find agreement on policies and programs that help support women with difficult pregnancies and take abortion off the table. Certainly, at a minimum, our federal government should not fund or encourage the taking of innocent lives through abortion. It is an

impoverished country that promotes and funds the killing of unborn children as a solution to an unexpected pregnancy.

I once again urge you to preserve the longstanding pro-life provisions in the FY2020 appropriations bills without weakening them or any of the President's pro-life actions. Additionally, I ask you to look earnestly for ways to support and empower women that do not pit them against their unborn children. We must all do better to genuinely help the poor and marginalized, those who live in the peripheries, and those struggling with an unexpected or difficult pregnancy for any reason. This cannot be done in truth or charity if the solution we offer is to eliminate the child.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph F. Naumann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Most Reverend Joseph F. Naumann
Archbishop of Kansas City, KS
Chairman, Committee on Pro-Life Activities