



Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194

202-541-3070 • FAX 202-541-3054 • EMAIL PROLIFE@USCCB.ORG • WEB WWW.USCCB.ORG/PROLIFE

October 31, 2019

Dear Senator,

On multiple occasions in recent years, our national attention has been briefly drawn to the disturbing reality of abortion doctors keeping fetal remains. Most recently, 2,400 bodies were found in the Illinois home of Dr. Ulrich Klopfer, who performed abortions in Indiana. "The grisly discovery of these fetal remains at the Illinois home of a deceased abortion doctor shocks the conscience," stated the Indiana Attorney General. Before Klopfer, employees of abortion doctor Douglas Karpen testified that he regularly flushed body parts down the toilet at his Texas clinic. Michael Roth, a Michigan abortion doctor, kept body parts in jars in his car. And other abortion clinics have been found storing biohazard bags full of body parts in closets or throwing them into the regular garbage.¹

These instances are making people on both sides of the abortion debate feel disturbed, sad, angry—and rightly so. Women who have experienced abortion have expressed that learning of the disrespectful treatment of fetal remains has been traumatic.² This is unsurprising when you consider that every culture and religious tradition has customs and practices surrounding how to care for and dispose of the dead. For Catholics, the Church has long taught that “the human body shares in the dignity of ‘the image of God’”³, that our bodies are a reminder of the bodily resurrection of Jesus and of that resurrection which we too will experience after death, and burying the dead is taught as one of the seven corporal works of mercy. Other faiths and belief systems likewise promote dignified treatment of the deceased and respectful disposal of their remains. Health regulations, ethical guidance for medicine and science, trauma and emergency response, and religious and moral belief all point towards the need for a society to respectfully dispose of each human body.

I believe we, as a nation, can and should ensure respectful treatment of fetal remains after an abortion. I therefore applaud Senator Braun’s Dignity for Aborted Children Act (S. 2590), which attempts to instill some dignity in how these bodies are treated by insisting that fetal remains be buried or cremated, as we do in the normal course with other human bodies. Whether you support or oppose legalized abortion, I hope you will agree that these bodies should not be wantonly discarded as medical waste or preserved at the whim of the abortion doctor. Such basic courtesy is in keeping with society’s treatment of all other deceased persons including cadavers, donated organs and tissues, remains that are recovered after traumatic incidents, and so on. As a

¹ Examples: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/opinion/planned-parenthood-caught-illegally-storing-aborted-babies-in-janitors-closets>; <http://sais.health.pa.gov/commonpoc/content/publiccommonpoc/PDF/9CG01119697341400L.PDF>; https://www.lifesitenews.com/images/pdfs/MichiganRTL-03152012-Abortion_Clinic_Abuses_March_2012.pdf

² <https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2019/09/19/woman-says-abortion-doctor-who-stored-fetal-remains-left-her-scarred/>

<https://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/2019/10/20/indiana-ag-hill-fetal-remains-disturb-those-both-sides-abortion-debate/4024705002/>

³ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 364

nation, we can at least come together to ensure all human remains are treated with basic human dignity.

I urge you to support S. 2590 as a reasonable, common ground response to ensure that all human remains, including the bodily remains of an aborted child, are treated with dignity and respect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph F. Naumann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

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