



## Department of Social Development and World Peace

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • FAX 202-541-3339  
WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/SDWP

September 5, 2006

(Letter to U.S. Senators who have NOT co-sponsored S. 3768)

Dear Senator:

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops urges you to consider co-sponsoring the Victim-Activated Landmine Abolition Act of 2006 (S. 3768). Senator Patrick Leahy and Senator Arlen Specter have introduced this bipartisan legislation to prohibit the United States from procuring landmines and other victim-activated weapons.

The Catholic Bishops of our nation have declared: “The United States should lead an international effort to reduce and ultimately ban the use of anti-personnel landmines....” Catholic moral teaching on just war insists that noncombatant immunity be respected and that the use of force be discriminate. As the historical use of landmines makes clear, these indiscriminate weapons frequently kill and maim innocent civilians, often long after active hostilities have ceased.

For more than a decade the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has joined the Holy See and Catholic bishops from around the world in calling for a ban on landmines as indiscriminate and insidious weapons that fail to distinguish between combatants and noncombatants and between times of war and times of peace.

The Victim-Activated Landmine Abolition Act will strengthen the moral standing of our nation as our world moves further along the path to a comprehensive ban on landmines. At the same time this legislation will help protect future generations from the scourge of these weapons. I urge you to co-sponsor S. 3768. Your leadership can help build momentum for this important humanitarian issue.

Sincerely yours,

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski  
Bishop of Orlando  
Chairman, Committee on International Policy



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(Letter to U.S. Senators who have co-sponsored S. 3768)

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops I write to thank you for co-sponsoring the Victim-Activated Landmine Abolition Act of 2006 (S. 3768). As you know, this bipartisan legislation will prohibit the United States from procuring landmines and other victim-activated weapons.

The Catholic Bishops of our nation have declared: "The United States should lead an international effort to reduce and ultimately ban the use of anti-personnel landmines..." Catholic moral teaching on just war insists that noncombatant immunity be respected and that the use of force be discriminate. As the historical use of landmines makes clear, these indiscriminate weapons frequently kill and maim innocent civilians, often long after active hostilities have ceased.

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The Victim-Activated Landmine Abolition Act will strengthen the moral standing of our nation as our world moves further along the path to a comprehensive ban on landmines. At the same time this legislation will help protect future generations from the scourge of these weapons.

For these reasons, our Conference of bishops is grateful for your leadership in co-sponsoring S. 3768. Thank you for helping to build momentum for this important humanitarian issue.

Sincerely yours,

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski  
Bishop of Orlando  
Chairman, Committee on International Policy