

February 28, 2023

To: Montana House Judiciary Committee

From: Matthew Brower, Executive Director of the Montana Catholic Conference

Re: Testimony in support of HB 786

Madam Chair and members of the committee, my name is Matt Brower and I currently serve as the Executive Director of the Montana Catholic Conference. I speak on behalf of the Roman Catholic bishops of Montana.

I am here today to voice our support for House Bill 786.

The Catholic Church teaches that the intentional taking of innocent human life is always wrong and we believe that when a woman undergoes an abortion, lives are drastically and tragically altered and none more so than the unborn child. We hold, too, that women who choose abortion do not surrender the inherent dignity with which they, and every human person, have been endowed by God. Concern for their well-being cannot be an afterthought and cannot be contingent on the choices they make regarding their unborn child.

House Bill 786 reflects an essential concern for the health and well-being of women who choose abortion. Good medicine ought to always be patient-centered, and requiring a medical practitioner to track and report adverse side effects resulting from a medication abortion should be beyond debate. Such requirements are ultimately at the service of women's health.

While we oppose all abortions, no matter the method, as long as they occur, the safety of the women involved should be among our chief concerns and House Bill 786 furthers this goal.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, on behalf of the Montana Catholic Conference, I urge a "do pass" and thank you for your time.