



DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON · DIOCESE OF RICHMOND
Representing Virginia's Catholic bishops and their dioceses in public policy matters

Statement Opposing Funding for LARCs – May 9, 2018

Good morning! I'm Jeff Caruso, the executive director of the Virginia Catholic Conference. We are the public policy office of Virginia's Catholic bishops.

Currently the General Assembly is haggling over a state budget that includes somewhere between 6 million and 12 million dollars for a pilot program to push long-acting reversible contraceptives – LARCs – on low-income women as well as teenage girls. These teenage girls would receive these LARCs without the crucial involvement of their parents, who have primary responsibility for their children's health and well-being. Pushing LARCs onto teenage girls without their parents' knowledge or involvement is bad for both teens and families. It is bad policy.

In addition, much of the program money would flow to the abortion industry, including the already mammoth Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood is a major supplier of LARCs. It provided 2,701,866 contraceptive services last year, about 513,000 of which were "Long-Acting Methods". It is also the largest abortion provider in the country. Let me be clear: Planned Parenthood is the largest purveyor of preborn infant death in the country.

While the number of abortions in the U.S. dropped by 31 percent between 1995 and 2014 Planned Parenthood's money-making abortion business grew by leaps and bounds. The number of Planned Parenthood abortions expanded a whopping 147 percent: Planned Parenthood went from aborting 133,900 unborn children every year to aborting 324,000 unborn children a year!

Planned Parenthood went from owning 10 percent of the abortion market to cornering 35 percent of the industry that victimizes women and their unborn children.

The bloated abortion industry does not need any more of Virginia taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. Last year Planned Parenthood received 544 million dollars from taxpayers and made a profit of 98.5 million dollars! Meanwhile, it spends millions of dollars each election cycle to push its agenda on policymakers and the public.

Surely Virginia has a better place to put its money than to pump it into the billion-dollar, death-inducing abortion industry.

We believe the LARC pilot program is wrongheaded, bad policy and lamentable. Today, we urge the General Assembly to remove the funding for this regrettable new program, which preys on poor women and teenagers. If it does not remove the funding, at the very least it must not feed the already bloated abortion industry. Women deserve better; taxpayers demand better; and Virginia *is* better than this.