



Statement by Bishop Burbidge and Bishop Knestout on Governor's Signature of Abortion Bills

April 11, 2020

Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of the Diocese of Arlington and Bishop Barry C. Knestout of the Diocese of Richmond issued the following statement on the Governor's signature of abortion legislation yesterday:

“Yesterday, Governor Northam announced that he had signed the so-called ‘Reproductive Health Protection Act’ (SB 733 & HB 980). We are deeply saddened and disappointed by his signature of this legislation. That he would take this action on Good Friday, one of the most solemn days for Christians, is a particular affront to all who profess the Gospel of life.

The legislation signed by the Governor repeals health and safety protections at abortion facilities, allows non-physicians to perform first-trimester abortions, and removes essential informed consent requirements, including the opportunity to view an ultrasound. Over the past eight years, abortions have decreased by 42% in Virginia. Tragically but undoubtedly, these changes to our state law will reverse that life-saving progress and increase the number of abortions.

In February, we joined thousands of people of many different faiths to proclaim life at our state capitol at the second annual March for Life. Regrettably, the Governor and a majority of Virginia's legislators have adopted a far different message.

Though elected officials have stripped Virginia law of many longstanding provisions that protect unborn children and the health and safety of women, the pursuit of a culture of life in our Commonwealth will persevere. This pursuit will continue to save lives because the sacrificial, life-giving love that Christ pours out on us is abundant, fruitful and overflowing. As the Easter season begins, the Lord of life calls us to embrace new life in Him. Through this new life, let us come together with renewed zeal in prayer, advocacy and witness for life.”

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