



Statement by Bishop Burbidge and Bishop Knestout on Governor Youngkin's Actions on Coercive Life-Ending Bills

May 2, 2025

Today, Governor Youngkin vetoed SB 780/HB 2371 and SB 1105/HB 1716. These bills would have ended many lives. They also failed to protect the religious freedom and conscience rights of those who object to providing or paying for abortion-inducing drugs and devices, contraceptives and sterilizations. One of these measures also would have granted minors a “right” to be sterilized – in direct conflict with Virginia’s parental consent law. We commend Governor Youngkin for rejecting these coercive bills. His vetoes protect life, liberty and parental rights.

We are also disappointed that the Governor chose to sign HB 1609, which requires a state commission to consider making procedures such as IVF and embryo banking “essential health benefits.” Regrettably, his signature of this bill moves these procedures closer to becoming mandated benefits that health insurance plans would be forced to cover – in violation of fundamental religious liberty and conscience rights. While IVF creates some lives, it destroys many others. There are alternatives to address infertility – in ways that do not put countless lives at risk of being destroyed or indefinitely frozen.

Finally, we thank the thousands of people who used the Virginia Catholic Conference’s action alerts to raise objections to each of these bills. Your voices are vital.

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