

CATHOLICS  
FOR  
CHOICE

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IN GOOD CONSCIENCE

November 4, 2015

Ohio House of Representatives  
Community and Family Advancement Committee  
77 S. High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215

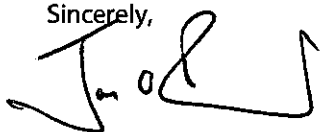
Dear Chairman Derickson, Ranking Minority Member Howse and Members of the Committee:  
I write to strongly encourage you and your fellow committee members to oppose HB 294, a bill that would harshly limit access to safe and legal healthcare for Ohio women who rely on Planned Parenthood and other women's health clinics for the care they need. Catholics for Choice serves as the voice for Catholics who believe our faith's teachings demand that every individual must follow their own conscience and respect others' right to do the same. We stand with the majority of the 70 million Catholics in the United States—nearly two million Catholics in Ohio—who support access to reproductive health services.

Catholics, in full accordance with the teachings of our faith, support the right of all people to follow their own consciences when making critical moral decisions, including decisions about reproductive healthcare. Catholics agree with the majority of Americans who want healthcare decisions to be made by patients, according to their own consciences and in consultation with their medical providers, loved ones or clergy they choose to involve. Men and women of Ohio have the right to make their own conscience-based decisions about where and from whom they receive these services. This legislation would prevent those choices. Passing HB 294 would impact patients that receive services through healthcare providers, such as Planned Parenthood and other clinics, for STI prevention, breast and cervical cancer screenings, infant mortality prevention, as well as programs to prevent domestic violence and teach strategies for healthy relationships.

The majority of the nearly two million Ohio Catholics expect their elected officials to stand up for the conscience of every individual who will suffer if this legislation is allowed to pass. Catholics support policies that enable people to make decisions about their future and the future of their families, each according to their own conscience or faith tradition. This legislation will unjustly hinder the consciences of men and women in Ohio who seek reproductive health services in your state.

Support for reproductive healthcare is grounded in the core principle of Catholicism, which respects the moral agency of all people and their right to follow their consciences on all matters. I urge you to oppose HB 294, to respect the conscience rights of each and every Ohio citizen and to allow them make their own decisions about their health with the provider they trust and choose.

Sincerely,



Jon O'Brien

PRESIDENT

Jon O'Brien

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