



DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE

OFFICE OF FAMILY LIFE

Time to Act: Pro-Life Legislation in North Carolina

Summary

The North Carolina General Assembly is considering pro-life legislation for the current legislative session. It is vital for Catholics to contact their state legislators and urge them to pass the broadest possible protections for the unborn child and, at the same time, to expand support for mothers and families.

Background

It has been [reported](#) that N.C. elected officials are debating whether to introduce a “heartbeat bill,” which would restrict abortion after a fetal heartbeat is detected (around 6 weeks gestation), or alternatively, a bill restricting abortion at around 13 weeks gestation.

In 2020, approximately 88% of the total reported abortions in North Carolina took place before 13 weeks, according to [data](#) published by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. A bill restricting abortion at 13 weeks, while a step forward, would not protect most unborn children who die by abortion in our state. A bill tied to detection of a fetal heartbeat would have a much greater impact.

As we push for legal protection in our state for the unborn, it is vital that we also advocate for increased funding for alternatives to abortion by funding pregnancy and parenting support services, adoption, and policies that make it easier for families to raise children, such as flexible parental leave and affordable healthcare and childcare. Initiatives like these should be paired with legislation protecting the unborn.

In the [statement](#) “Standing With Moms in Need”, the U.S. Catholic Bishops called for “a society in which the legal protection of human life is accompanied by profound care for mothers and their children. We exhort our nation to prioritize the well-being of women, children, and families with both material resources and personal accompaniment so that no woman ever feels forced to choose between her future and the life of her child.”



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Key Messages

- As the U.S. Catholic Bishops have [stated](#), “justice requires that the basic protections of the law against violence be extended to the preborn child.”
- A heartbeat law would protect more unborn children than a restriction at 13 weeks, which would leave around 88% of abortions in North Carolina unaffected.
- Legislation to protect the unborn child should be paired with increased support for pregnant and parenting mothers and families, “so that no woman ever feels forced to choose between her future and the life of her child.”

Action Item – Contact State Legislators

- 1) Find your N.C. legislators by visiting ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators .
- 2) Enter your **FULL** street address (including city) and press ‘Enter’ to search for your legislators.
- 3) Click on the name of your representatives in the N.C. House and Senate to find their email addresses and phone numbers.
- 4) Write a brief, personal message asking your representatives to pass the broadest possible protections for the unborn and to expand support for pregnant and parenting mothers.