



May 5, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Members of the Health and Human Services Conference Committee:

The Minnesota Catholic Conference, the public policy voice for the Catholic Church in Minnesota, has joined multiple letters on HHS-related matters, but we write specifically to highlight a few additional provisions under consideration in your committee.

In particular, we ask that you include in the conference report:

1. Expansion of Medical Assistance (MA) program to include at least six months of coverage for postpartum women found in both the House (art. 1, section 15, subd. 6, lines 17.30-18.6 and Senate (art. 1, section 15, subd. 6; lines 17.30-18.6) HHS omnibus bills
2. Abortion clinic licensing provisions proposed by the Senate (art. 2, section 27, lines 97.28-100.9)
3. Expansion of mandatory child sex abuse reporters proposed by the House (art. 12, section 3, subd. 1 & section 4, subd. 5; lines 365.28-366.23)
4. Emergency Services and Shelter Program Funding (House position at lines 570-571 of the HHS Budget Tracking spreadsheet)

Medical Assistance

Increasing coverage to ensure maternal physical and psychological well-being postpartum is an important step in better protecting vulnerable new mothers, especially given that maternal mortality rates have been on the rise in the United States. At minimum, the extended eligibility period of six months, on which both the House and Senate agree, will better protect moms, support families, and also help newborns.

Abortion Clinic Licensing

Abortion clinics, like other outpatient clinics, should be subject to basic, common-sense regulations. In fact, the abortion industry (e.g. National Abortion Federation) itself prescribes a list of best practices that, as of yet, do not apply by law to clinics in Minnesota. Strangely, beauty salons and tattoo parlors are subject to more regulation and inspection than abortion clinics. Protecting women and families from unsafe and unclean facilities should be a goal that we all share regardless of one's view on the morality of abortion.

Mandatory Reporters

The tragic history of sex abuse within the Catholic Church is well known. We have learned many lessons, made reparation for the sins of clergy, and have now become leaders in child protection. All

Catholic Church employees and volunteers undergo training to detect sexual abuse and child exploitation and are required to report it to law enforcement—whether or not they are a mandatory reporter under the current statute. The proposed statutory change is consistent with what should already be happening in every one of our parishes, schools, and ministries.

What is less well-reported is the way in which sexual abuse is a societal-wide problem, including in public schools and youth athletics. This legislation will hopefully close some gaps in areas where adults have regular interactions with children, but which are not occupations that are currently included in the class of mandatory reporters.

Emergency Services and Shelter Program Funding

We ask you to adopt the House position to invest \$9 million in annual funding for the Emergency Services Program. As noted by our partner organization, Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, “emergency shelters have been working tirelessly on the frontlines since before the pandemic to respond to our state’s housing and homelessness crisis, and the need for their services will remain long after COVID-19 has gone.”

Additionally, increasing the emergency shelter capacity remains vital as well, especially if there is considerable displacement from a removal on the eviction moratorium. These provisions have very small price tags in light of the direct human need that they serve.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to all Minnesotans.

Respectfully yours,



Jason Adkins
Executive Director
jadkins@mncatholic.org