



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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August 14, 2015

WCC SUPPORTS BAN ON SALE AND USE OF FETAL BODY PARTS

The WCC is supporting Assembly Bill 305, which would prohibit the sale and use of fetal body parts derived from an unborn child whose life is terminated by an induced abortion.

Bishop Robert Morlino and WCC Associate Director Barbara Sella each offered oral testimony in support of AB 305 to the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety on August 11.

Bishop Morlino began his testimony by responding to the assertion of some medical professionals that use of aborted fetal body parts is essential to finding cures for devastating diseases. “If we generally share the goal of improving the health of the community, is that health limited to the physical health of this or that particular patient? Doesn’t the health of the community have something to do with its psychological health, with its spiritual health, and with the help of reasoned discourse?”

Observing that dismembering a unique member of the human species for commercial purposes reduces them to things, Bishop Morlino asked, “Is it really good for our community, is it healthy for Cecil the lion to be ever more humanized and for unique individuals of the human species to be ever more dehumanized?”

Paraphrasing Pope Francis, Bishop Morlino said that “to have credibility in promoting environmental stewardship, care, and awareness . . . you have to show the same respect for the ecology of human nature, for the ecology of the human being. And protecting the ecology of a human being certainly cannot include dismembering it carefully, so that it can be used for research or whatever.”

“The physical health, the psychological health, and the moral health, the spiritual health of the whole community depends on that awareness, that people can never be reduced to things.”

In her testimony, Sella affirmed that “a civilized society treats every human being as an end, not as a means to an end. A human being must never be seen as a collection of spare body parts. The sale of fetal tissue and organs is one more example of what Pope Francis has called the ‘throwaway culture, which has today enslaved the hearts and minds of so many.’”

“The Catholic Church firmly believes that medical progress can be made without selling human body parts as if they were mere commodities,” Sella continued. “Today when medical experimentation on animals is falling out of favor with the general public and with many in the scientific community, we need to insist that scientists find other ways to cure diseases without sacrificing human lives. We are confident that if the sale of aborted fetal body parts is prohibited, human ingenuity will find other, moral means of conquering diseases. The many cures made possible by the use of adult stem cells is proof of this.”

Finally, Sella expressed concern “that the trade in fetal body parts depends on providing false or misleading information to young and vulnerable women about what will happen to their aborted children. How many of these women are truly consenting to what has become a lucrative trade?” she asked. “We see parallels here with the practice of harvesting adult organs from the poor in developing countries for the benefit of wealthier persons in the developed world. We must not allow this to continue.”

Assembly Bill 305 is authored by Representative André Jacque (R-DePere). The Committee adjourned without taking further action on the bill. Readers are encouraged to contact their representatives, urging them to support this legislation. Go to <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/> and type in home address under “Find My Legislators.”

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