



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 81 AND ASSEMBLY BILL 128:
NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION
Presented to the Senate Committee on Insurance, Housing and Trade
By Barbara Sella, Associate Director
December 13, 2017**

On behalf of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference, I thank you for this opportunity to present testimony in support of Senate Bill 81 and Assembly Bill 128.

This legislation accomplishes a very simple and straightforward objective. It affirms that funds held by public authorities are prohibited from being used to subsidize the performance of abortions.

Much like the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, the legislation prohibits the state's Group Insurance Board from providing health insurance that includes coverage for abortion services, with exceptions. By aligning state and federal law, SB 81 and AB 128 will ensure that our public policies champion the life and dignity of every human person.

This legislation is sensible. Indeed, twenty-one states restrict abortion coverage in public employee insurance plans, including our neighbors Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio (see Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation – April 1, 2017 data report).

Some argue that women will be denied comprehensive health care if this legislation passes. It bears repeating that taking a human life is not health care, for it is neither healthy nor caring. As Pope Francis has written, "It is not 'progressive' to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life..." (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 214)

Others argue that the legislation will have a disproportionate effect on women who have low incomes, have disabilities, and/or are members of minority groups. The Catholic Church understands the challenges that these women face and insists that the private and public sectors do more to help women and children in need. So, while every unborn child deserves protection, every woman deserves support to carry her child to term and, if she so chooses, to raise her child. All pregnant women deserve the best pre-natal care, maternity leave, child care, and the necessary assistance if they have a child with special needs.

We urge you to ensure that public funds in Wisconsin are not used to procure abortions. Please support SB 81 and AB 128.