



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Health

FROM: Barbara Sella, Associate Director for Respect Life and Social Concerns

DATE: October 7, 2021

RE: AB 262, Induced Abortion Reporting

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC), the public policy voice of the Catholic bishops of Wisconsin, urges you to support Assembly Bill 262, which requires hospitals, clinics, and facilities that induce abortions to report additional information to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), as regards sex and fetal anomaly of the aborted child. The DHS must also collect the names of the facilities in which abortions take place.

We think it is essential that women, the public, and lawmakers have complete access to all the relevant information involving abortions, while at the same time protecting the identity of the mother.

The research arm of Planned Parenthood, the Guttmacher Institute, agrees that induced abortion reporting requirements are essential:

The incidence of induced abortion is an important public health indicator. On its own, the understanding of abortion levels, rates and trends is key to documenting the success of efforts to help women avoid unintended pregnancy, the precursor to most abortions. As a component of other statistics, abortion incidence data are essential to calculating levels and rates of pregnancy overall, teen pregnancy and unintended pregnancy.

Data from ongoing abortion surveillance also inform public health in two other key areas. Data on basic demographic characteristics of abortion patients (e.g., age, race and ethnicity, and marital status) are needed to identify disparities in reproductive health outcomes and help tailor public health interventions to groups at particular risk of having an unintended pregnancy. Also, surveillance of factors such as gestational age and abortion procedure used provides important insights into the safety of abortion and changes in clinical practice.¹

¹ Joerg Dreweke, "Abortion Reporting: Promoting Public Health, Not Politics," Guttmacher Policy Review, Volume 18, Issue no. 2 (Spring 2015), <https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2015/06/abortion-reporting-promoting-public-health-not-politics>.

While we oppose the Guttmacher Institute's support for abortion, we think it makes a good case for collecting abortion data.

We therefore urge you to support Assembly Bill 262.
