



CONNECTICUT CATHOLIC PUBLIC AFFAIRS CONFERENCE  
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## **Bishops' Message Affirming Life**

(The recent passage of disturbing new abortion laws in New York State and public comments from Virginia political leaders has properly raised the public debate on abortion and the rights of the unborn and now born.

The following is statement in response to these events by Archbishop Leonard P. Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of the Bridgeport Diocese, Bishop Michael R. Cote of the Norwich Diocese and the Most Reverend Paul P. Chomnycky, OSBM, Ukrainian Eparchy of Stamford)

February 7, 2019

Dear Friends in Christ:

On January 22, 2019, Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York signed into law the Reproductive Health Act (RHA), a tragic abortion expansion bill which allows for the killing of an unborn child until birth as a "fundamental" right. Safeguards that previously protected those infants accidentally born alive during an abortion have also been repealed under this new law. Other provisions of this unjust law also place the lives of women in jeopardy by allowing abortions to be performed by non-physicians at the discretion of the abortionist and prevent prosecution for an attack on an unborn child through criminal acts of violence or coerced abortion.

Other states such as Rhode Island, Virginia, and New Mexico are now trying to pass similar legislation.

We, the Catholic Bishops of Connecticut, unequivocally denounce such legislation and all legislation that allows the direct taking of human life at any stage of development, especially in the womb. We uphold the Church's unchanging teaching that affirms every human life to be unique, precious, and a gift from God. It is a basic human right that every life be protected from the moment of conception to natural death.

At a time when we should be working together to better safeguard all lives and find common ground in our increasingly polarized society the New York law makes late-term abortion more available by adopting an absolutist "pro-choice" position that is unacceptable and should speak to the conscience of all those who value life.

As a community of faith, we must continue to take a stand for our most vulnerable brothers and sisters in the womb and their mothers, who are often coerced and

pressured into making choices against the life they carry. They need our prayers, support and accompaniment to help them choose life, especially when they face any difficulties during pregnancy.

For those who have undergone an abortion, the church stands ready to assist with healing and reconciliation through a variety of means, including Project Rachel, a program which manifests the forgiveness and mercy of God.

As we continue this struggle, we can remain confident that everything is in the hands of God, who sees all, who judges justly, and from whose hand no one can be snatched away – especially an innocent unborn child.

Committed to prayer, education, advocacy and acts of reparation for the millions of lives already lost through abortion, we invite you to join us to serve as witnesses of the truth and defenders of human life in our society.

With every best wish and prayer, we remain

+ Leonard P. Blair

Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair  
Archbishop of Hartford

+ Frank J. Caggiano

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano  
Bishop of Bridgeport

+ Michael R. Cote

Most Reverend Michael R. Cote  
Bishop of Norwich

+ P. Chomnycky, OSB

Most Reverend P. Paul Chomnycky  
Eparch of Stamford