

Bill to codify Roe one of the most 'extreme' abortion bills

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |



WASHINGTON — The Women's Health Protection Act of 2021, which was passed by the U.S. House Sept. 24 by a 218-211 vote, "is nothing short of child sacrifice," said Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco.

The "misnamed" measure, he said, "shows to what radical extremes the supposedly 'pro-choice' advocates in our country will go to protect what they hold most sacred: the right to kill innocent human beings in the womb," he said in a Sept. 21 statement.

Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila also weighed in with a statement a day later, echoing the San Francisco prelate in urging the bill be defeated.

The bill would nullify requirements to provide women seeking abortion with specific information on their unborn child and on alternatives to abortion.

"Today, the abortion industry and its supporters are pushing one of the most extreme national abortion bills this country has ever seen, and doing it under the lie that abortion is a form of health care that must be protected and promoted," the Denver prelate said.

If Congress passes the bill and it becomes law, it would invalidate nearly all existing state limitations on abortion.

The House and Senate bills — H.R. 3755 and S. 1975 — would codify the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision in law legalizing abortion nationwide. It would establish the legal

right to abortion in all 50 states under federal law.

The bill would nullify requirements to provide women seeking abortion with specific information on their unborn child and on alternatives to abortion; laws requiring a waiting period before a woman receives an abortion; laws allowing medical professionals to opt out of providing abortions; and laws stating that only licensed physicians can perform abortions.

"It is especially shameful that any self-professed Catholic would be implicated in such an evil, let alone advocate for it," Archbishop Cordileone said.

While he didn't name any Catholic lawmakers in his statement, the archbishop has taken House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., to task for her support of legal abortion as a Catholic.

Archbishop Cordileone implored Catholic politicians "in particular" to listen to what Pope Francis said about abortion during his flight back to Rome from Slovakia.

He quoted the pope: "Abortion is more than a problem. Abortion is homicide. ... It is a human life, period. And this human life must be respected. This principle is so clear, and to those who cannot understand, I would ask two questions: Is it right to kill a human life to solve a problem? Scientifically, it is a human life. The second question: Is it right to hire a hitman to solve a problem?"

Archbishop Cordileone also said he supported the Sept. 15 letter sent to members of Congress by the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

In that letter, Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., urged lawmakers to reject this "deceptively-named, extreme bill (that) would impose abortion on demand nationwide at any stage of pregnancy (and) ... eliminate modest and widely supported pro-life laws at every level of government."

"This bill insists that elective abortion, including late-term elective abortion, is a 'human right' and 'women's health care' — something that should be promoted, funded and celebrated," the pro-life chairman said. "In fact, abortion is the opposite of women's health care, and is an extreme violation of human rights. It has no clear justification in terms of women's health."

Archbishop Aquila called on Catholics to urge their elected representatives in Congress "to vote 'No' on this heinous attack on innocent life."

"I also ask you to join me in supporting the many great organizations that provide actual compassionate care for pregnant women, mothers, parents and families and not the abortion industry," he added. "Let us pray for an end to abortion, a conversion of heart in our country and that all life might be valued from conception to natural death."