



FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

The nonpartisan public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Florida

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Catholic Bishops of Florida Praise Upholding of 24-Hour Abortion Reflection Period

TALLAHASSEE – The bishops of Florida are elated to see the ruling by Judge Angela Dempsey of the Second Judicial Circuit Court upholding a 2015 state law that gives women 24 hours to reflect on information provided by physicians before proceeding with abortions.

On April 8, 2022, Judge Dempsey granted the state’s motion for summary judgment, rejecting the plaintiffs’ constitutional challenges to the law and arguing that “it is now clear that similarly invasive procedures are typically subject to de facto waiting periods,” and “the Act merely brings abortions in line with the standard of care.”

“The 24-hour reflection period is a reasonable measure that will empower women to make truly informed, deliberate decisions apart from the abortion industry’s pressures,” said Christie Arnold, associate for social concerns and respect life.

Waiting periods are established in law for other significant decisions such as entering into marriage (three days), dissolving a marriage (20 days), purchasing a handgun (three days), and cremating a loved one (48 hours). This law brings Florida into alignment with 26 other states with waiting periods after mandated counseling from the abortionist before obtaining an abortion. These include the two states bordering Florida – Georgia (24-hour reflection period) and Alabama (48-hour reflection period).

The Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops (FCCB) commends the legislative leaders who advanced this important law through the Florida House and Senate in 2015, especially bill sponsors former Senator Anitere Flores (R-Miami) and former Representative Jennifer Sullivan (R-Eustis). The FCCB is grateful that the law is now in effect after years of litigation and looks forward to supporting additional legislative protections for women and unborn children throughout Florida.

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