



The National Catholic Bioethics Center

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Bioethics and Public Policy Report [Click on Endnotes for More Information]

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The National Scene: A U.S. House of Representatives vote to prevent our tax dollars from being used to fund abortion on demand, as well as to protect the rights of conscience of all from having to assist at, provide, or pay for abortion, is expected as early as the week of May 2: **No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act (H.R. 3)**. Please see: nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=290. • A federal resolution to deny federal funding to **Planned Parenthood (H. Con. Res. 36)** was approved by the U.S. House but rejected by the Senate. • The U.S. Congress passed [H.R. 1473](#) which reinstates the **D.C. abortion funding ban**. It also reduces funding for the **United Nations Population Fund** and **Title X** domestic family planning programs. The **Mexico City Policy** was not included, though funding for international family planning was adjusted downward. However, federal tax dollars will be used to fund international programs that provide abortion.¹

The State of Conscience/Religious Liberty: A state court in **Illinois** issued a decision affirming Illinois' conscience protection law, by striking down a state law that compels pharmacy owners to dispense Plan B and other forms of emergency contraception, even if doing so violated their religious or moral beliefs.² At the same time, the **Illinois Legislature** refused to provide conscience protections to faith-based adoption agencies, who wish to be able to determine the best placement for children based on the right to a home with both a mother and a father.³ • The **Iowa Legislature** is advancing legislation that would require a physician to adhere to a patient's advanced directive, even if it violated the physician's conscience.⁴ • The **Missouri Legislature** is considering legislation which would protect pharmacists of conscience from discrimination when they refuse to dispense the "Morning-After Pill" and RU486.⁵ • Douglas County, **Oregon** will pay a fired records clerk \$145,000 for violating her religious freedom. The clerk was fired in 2008 for refusing on religious grounds to issue certificates of registered domestic partnership to applicants.⁶

The State of Marriage: **Archbishop Chaput** has praised, as an affirmation of the true understanding of marriage, the defeat of a legislative proposal which would have legalized civil unions in **Colorado**.⁷ • **Indiana's Senate** passed a bill allowing a voter ballot initiative, proposing a state constitutional amendment which would ban same-sex marriage and civil unions.⁸ • The **Rhode Island Legislature** is considering the legalization of same-sex civil unions.⁹ • The **Delaware Senate and House** have approved a bill legalizing civil unions, which is now going to the governor for signature.¹⁰ • The **Arkansas Supreme Court** rejected a voter-approved initiative that barred cohabitating unmarried couples from serving as adoptive or foster parents.¹¹ • A bill aimed at establishing a constitutional amendment

banning same-sex marriage has been introduced in the **North Carolina House of Representatives**.¹² • A **Montana** District Court judge has ruled that neither the courts nor the legislature can overturn the state's constitutional amendment defining marriage as only between a man and a woman.¹³

State by State: • A bill to provide for a voter ballot initiative, on the issue of minors and **parental notification** before an abortion, is before the **Montana Legislature**.¹⁴ • The **New Hampshire Legislature** is advancing a bill to require **parental notification** for abortions on minors.¹⁵ • The **Tennessee Legislature** is advancing legislation to provide a voter ballot initiative to limit **abortions** on demand. Abortion on demand currently is protected by a ruling of the Tennessee Supreme Court.¹⁶ • A number of legislative proposals **protecting vulnerable human life** are before the **Florida Legislature** including: a bill to prevent tax dollars from being used to provide elective abortion; a bill to require that an ultrasound be performed and reviewed with a woman before achieving informed consent for an abortion; and a bill to revise the procedure for judicial waiver of parental notice by a minor seeking an abortion.¹⁷ • The **Ohio Legislature** is advancing a bill to ban abortions after there is the presence of a **fetal heart**.¹⁸ • The **Illinois Legislature** has introduced a bill that would require abortion providers to give women seeking abortions the opportunity to view a fetal **ultrasound** before the procedure is performed.¹⁹ A similar bill is advancing in **Texas**.²⁰ • The **Alabama Legislature** is advancing the **Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act**, which protects unborn babies capable of feeling pain from abortion.²¹ A similar bill is advancing in the **Indiana Legislature**.²² • The **Vermont Legislature** is considering a bill to legalize **physician assisted suicide**.²³

Recent Good News: **Arizona's Governor** signed into law an act that would ban **abortions** that are sex-selection or race-based in nature.²⁴ • **Kansas' Governor** signed into law an act prohibiting **abortion** after the period of fetal pain awareness begins.²⁵ A similar act was signed into law by **Oklahoma's Governor**.²⁶ • The Governor of **Idaho** has signed into law an act banning **assisted suicide**.²⁷ • **See The State of Marriage and The State of Conscience/Religious Liberty.**

Sharing Your Good News and Your Efforts: If there are public policy advocacy strategies which you wish to share with others please e-mail mhilliard@ncbcenter.org.

Sharing of Resources: The web page of the National Catholic Bioethics Center is a significant resource in the realm of bioethics: www.ncbcenter.org. Also, bioethicists are on call twenty-four hours a day, every day of the week, for consultation by calling 215-877-2660.

¹ <http://nchla.org/legissectiondisplay.asp?ID=794>.

² <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/05/illinois-pharmacists-win-key-victory-on-morning-after-pill/>.

³ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/ct-met-gay-adoption-0414-20110413,0,3959680.story>.

⁴ <http://www.spokesman.com/blogs/hbo/2011/mar/29/senate-oks-conscience-law-21-13/>.

⁵ <http://www.greenfieldreporter.com/view/story/1580ecaf1e8c4a379004ee418bd82e2a/MO-XGR--Morning-After-Pill/>.

⁶ <http://www.registerguard.com/web/newslocalnews/26127706-41/county-slater-clerk-domestic-douglas.html.csp>.

⁷ <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/archbishop-chaput-praises-defeat-of-colorado-civil-unions-bill/>.

⁸ <http://www.baywindows.com/index.php?ch=news&sc=gibt&sc2=news&sc3=&id=118085>.

⁹ <http://www.lgbtqnation.com/2011/04/rhode-island-lawmakers-to-consider-civil-unions-as-alternative-to-gay-marriage/>.

¹⁰ [http://www.towleroad.com/2011/04/delaware-house-passes-civil-union-bill-26-15-governor-will-sign.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+towleroad%2Ffeed+\(Towleroad+Daily+%23gay+news\)](http://www.towleroad.com/2011/04/delaware-house-passes-civil-union-bill-26-15-governor-will-sign.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+towleroad%2Ffeed+(Towleroad+Daily+%23gay+news)).

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 - 12 <http://www.lgbtqnation.com/2011/04/constitutional-ban-on-same-sex-marriage-introduced-in-north-carolina-house/>.
 - 13 <http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/969-faith-and-morals/7231-montana-judge-rules-against-homosexual-couples-seeking-marriage-rights>.
 - 14 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/03/25/montana-gop-hears-abortion-parental-notification-ballot-measure/>.
 - 15 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/22/new-hampshire-parental-notification-on-abortion-bill-advancing/>.
 - 16 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/19/tennessee-senate-oks-amendment-to-limit-court-on-abortion/>.
 - 17 <http://www.flacathconf.org/reportssummaries/legislative-report.php>.
 - 18 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/03/30/ohio-cmte-oks-heartbeat-bill-banning-abortions-pro-lifers-split/>.
 - 19 <http://www.mysuburbanlife.com/hinsdale/statenews/x481356522/Proposal-would-require-ultrasound-offers-before-abortions>.
 - 20 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/12/texas-senate-panel-oks-bill-for-ultrasound-before-abortion/>.
 - 21 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/07/alabama-house-gives-ok-to-fetal-pain-based-abortion-ban/>.
 - 22 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/13/indiana-senate-panel-oks-fetal-pain-abortion-ban-bill/>.
 - 23 <http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/article/20110418/NEWS03/110417021/1050/COLUMNISTS/Vermont-assisted-suicide-bill-stirs-emotions-?odyssey=nav|head>.
 - 24 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/03/30/arizona-brewer-signs-ban-on-sex-selection-race-based-abortions/>.
 - 25 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/12/kansas-gov-sam-brownback-signs-fetal-pain-abortion-ban/>.
 - 26 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/20/oklahoma-gov-signs-fetal-pain-abortion-ban-obamacare-funding-ban/>.
 - 27 <http://www.lifenews.com/2011/04/07/idaho-governor-otter-signs-bill-banning-assisted-suicide/>.