



ARCHDIOCESES OF LOS ANGELES AND SAN FRANCISCO
DIOCESES OF FRESNO, MONTEREY, OAKLAND, ORANGE, SACRAMENTO, SAN BERNARDINO, SAN DIEGO, SAN JOSE, SANTA ROSA AND STOCKTON
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF VAN NUYS, MARONITE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF OUR LADY OF LEBANON OF LOS ANGELES

Statement of Catholic Bishops of California
in support of Proposition 4,
Waiting Period and Parental Notification before
Termination of Minor's Pregnancy

September 10, 2008

The California Catholic Conference of Bishops supports Proposition 4, the constitutional amendment initiative entitled, *Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy*, which will appear on the November 2008 ballot. The proposition would require notification of a parent, guardian, or in the case of alleged parental abuse, other adult family member of a minor 48 hours before she obtains an abortion, unless a judge determines that such notification places the minor in danger.

Proposition 4 contains public policy that is both sensible and realistic and which will benefit not only our families but our society as a whole. It is a sensible policy to encourage a minor girl faced with a serious decision like an unexpected pregnancy to go to her parents or family for their love, their wisdom, and their counsel. It is a realistic policy that her parents or family be notified of her request for an abortion whether or not she chooses to consult them. Society will benefit because similar involvement laws in other states have the effect of discouraging irresponsible sexual behavior and teenage pregnancies. In addition, individual rights and unborn babies will be protected because a minor girl will be afforded support in the unfortunate circumstance that she is being coerced to have an abortion.

Our *Catechism* teaches that the family is the "privileged community" wherein children are meant to grow in wisdom, stature and grace. It also counsels us that public authorities should not usurp the family's prerogatives or interfere in its life. We are convinced that the Church must be committed to the task of educating and supporting policy makers and administrators of justice, so that our society's laws will reflect those principles and moral values which advance the common good. And we believe that society's common good is enhanced when parental responsibility is respected, family integrity is honored and nascent human life is preserved.

We encourage Catholics in our state to share their time and treasure in promoting Proposition 4 as good public policy, and in exercising their citizenship in voting for it in November.