

Maryland to issue abortion clinic regulations

Statement from the Maryland Catholic Conference

The Maryland Catholic Conference hailed the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) on its decision to publish final regulations for sites performing surgical abortions in Maryland.

In a June 22 statement, the conference asserted that while no woman should ever have to resort to ending her unborn child's life through abortion, the regulations will go "a long way to protect the health and safety of women undergoing surgical abortions in Maryland."

These regulations will close the loophole allowing surgical abortion facilities to be regulated simply as doctor offices, which do not perform invasive surgery. The new regulations are based on those that govern other outpatient surgical facilities.

"We especially appreciate DHMH's transparency throughout the last 15 months," said Nancy Paltell, associate director for respect life with the Maryland Catholic Conference. "Their willingness to work closely with stakeholders, in a positive and collaborative approach, was first class."

"This needlessly tragic issue would have remained in the shadows and clinics would have continued to go essentially unregulated without the voices of Marylanders, those who consider themselves pro-choice as well as those who consider themselves pro-life, speaking out and calling for an end to 20 years of unchecked, and in too many cases, unsafe abortion clinics," Paltell said.

The Maryland Catholic Conference represents the state's Catholic bishops in Annapolis. It was a strong supporter of enacting new regulations for abortion clinics in Maryland.