

Pro-life postcard campaign challenges FOCA

The Archdiocese of Baltimore is concluding its participation in a pro-life postcard campaign that asks members of Congress to oppose the Freedom of Choice Act.

According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, FOCA will invalidate laws to protect women from unsafe abortion clinics, require taxpayer funding for abortions and require states to allow “partial birth” and other late-term abortions.

The USCCB launched a postcard campaign at Masses on the weekend of Jan. 24-25. Parishes in the archdiocese were encouraged to distribute the postcards at Masses on that weekend, or on the next two weekends, including Masses of Feb. 7-8.

“I hope that the postcard campaign will persuade some in the Legislature,” Archbishop Edwin F. O’Brien said. “We need to let those not with us know that we are very persistent on this.”

Archbishop O’Brien was to be in Dallas Feb. 2-4, attending the National Catholic Bioethics Center’s 22nd workshop for bishops. The topic was to be the conscience rights of health care professionals, another issue that could be impacted should FOCA ever be enacted.

President Barack Obama said while campaigning that he would sign FOCA legislation, but according to the Catholic News Service, the proposed legislation has not been introduced in the 111th Congress.

The pro-life postcard campaign allows parishioners to send a message directly to their U.S. representative and their two senators, in Maryland, Barbara A. Mikulski and Benjamin L. Cardin.

Linda Brenegan, the director of the archdiocesan Respect Life office, emphasized the urgency of the pro-life postcard campaign.

“It is imperative,” Mrs. Brenegan wrote in an e-mail, “to let President Obama know

that FOCA, if signed into law, would increase abortions, not decrease them; it would violate freedom of conscience of health care workers; it would place a barrier between children and their parents in a life-altering decision; it would deny the will of the people as expressed in common sense abortion laws in all 50 states.”