

# **Statement of Archbishop William E. Lori on Appeals Court Ruling on Baltimore City Ordinance Court Rules in Favor of Pro-life Pregnancy Centers**

*January 5, 2018*

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore applauded today's decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit striking down the Baltimore City ordinance that sought to force pro-life pregnancy centers to post signs stating they do not provide or refer for abortions or contraceptive services.

"These pregnancy centers exist to provide material and emotional support to young women in need and their families. These are small, volunteer-driven beacons of hope in a city in need of hope. The centers provide formula, diapers, baby clothes, strollers and other items, free of charge, to poor and vulnerable mothers in the most challenged neighborhoods of our community, including the center operating out of St. Ann's Catholic Church on Greenmount Avenue in East Baltimore," Archbishop Lori said.

The Court upheld a lower federal court's earlier ruling that the ordinance violated the center's First Amendment rights.

"We are grateful to the court for this important First Amendment precedent, which notably rejects the argument that a nonprofit's speech about important social issues constitutes commercial or professional speech. A related case is pending in the U.S. Supreme Court and we look forward to a similar ruling supporting the freedom of

religious nonprofits to help those in need and to speak clearly about important social issues.”