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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 575 PREPARED FOR
HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND WELFARE

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House Bill 575 represents a commonsense approach to ensure that women facing a difficult decision have all the information needed to consider their choices while fully protecting their privacy.

Catholic moral and social teaching strongly emphasizes the importance, the inherent dignity, of the human person. Individuals exercise their basic rights in the midst of the community. In addition to the right to life, to religious freedom, to freedom of conscience, and to other goods such as education, we recognize a basic right to health care that respects the dignity and autonomy of each human person.

Thus, a person's right to health care extends beyond access to medical procedures and includes access to the relevant and useful information needed when making a major decision regarding one's health care.

House Bill 575 requires the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, a neutral public agency, to provide relevant information and simply requires providers to direct patients to that information. This, combined with the opportunity to discuss any questions with a medical professional, ensures proper informed consent in a manner that fully respects the privacy of the patient.

In addition to providing this information, HB 575 also ensures that a woman considering an abortion be given the *opportunity* to view an ultrasound image. **It does not require her to view the image.** It does not require ultrasounds to occur where they otherwise would not, since ultrasounds are standard procedure already. In the event of a medical emergency, HB 575 does not require an ultrasound to be performed at all. The controversial transvaginal ultrasound is **never** required.

With the bi-partisan support of the sponsor, the principal co-sponsor and 59 other co-sponsors, it is clear that this commonsense measure has more than enough support to pass on the House floor. The Catholic Conference of Kentucky urges that members of this committee support HB 575 and not deprive the full House the opportunity to consider a bill with such widespread bi-partisan support.

The Catholic Conference of Kentucky is the public policy voice of the Commonwealth's four Roman Catholic Bishops, pastors of more than 400,000 Kentucky Catholics.

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**Most Reverend
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Bishop of Covington

**Most Reverend
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**Most Reverend
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