



THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC BIOETHICS CENTER

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Bioethics Public Policy Report

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State by State

- Illinois Right to Life and March for Life cosponsored an Illinois State March for Life, which was attended by thousands of people at the state capitol in Springfield, on April 17. Jeanne Mancini, president of March for Life, said that the March was especially important in light of attempts to include abortion in the State's Human Rights Act. For further information, click [here](#).
- The Arizona house of representatives voted to repeal the State's abortion ban by a 32-28 vote, even though there is a narrow majority of Republicans in the State's house. The bill will now go to the senate, where Republicans hold a similarly narrow 16-14 majority. For further information, click [here](#).
- The Kansas legislature overrode Democrat Gov. Laura Kelly's vetoes on four pro-life bills that will fund crisis pregnancy centers, give tax credits to crisis pregnancy centers, require doctors to ask why women are seeking abortions, and prohibit coerced abortions. These four bills were enacted even though Kansas' state constitution creates a "right" to abortion, according to the state supreme court. For further information, click [here](#).
- The Catholic bishops of Virginia are urging Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin to veto contraceptive mandate bills, one that would require all health insurance plans to cover contraceptives approved by the Food and Drug Administration, and another that would create a blanket "right" to contraceptives for all "persons," with no further specification as to age. For further information, click [here](#).
- The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration has issued emergency rules to combat "misinformation" and a "deeply dishonest scare campaign" by the Biden administration concerning the State's six-week abortion ban. Specifically, they have said that treatment for ectopic pregnancies do not constitute abortion under the law. For further information, click [here](#).
- Democratic Sen. Catherine Blakespear withdrew a proposed bill that would have expanded access to physician-assisted suicide after pushback from pro-life and Catholic groups as well as from physician-assisted suicide advocacy groups, the latter of whom said that the measure went too far. The bill would have removed a six-month terminal disease requirement and replaced it with a "grievous and irremediable medical condition" requirement, which could have included those suffering from dementia. An ethicist said that the proposal highlighted the need to

address the dementia and physician-assisted suicide crisis in the country. For further information, click [here](#) and [here](#).

- In New York State, several crisis pregnancy centers represented by the Thomas More Society have announced a joint suit against the State’s attorney general “to block imminent, ruinous legal action” against them for offering abortion pill reversal treatments. CompassCare, the first crisis pregnancy center to medicalize in New York, said that the State was “on the warpath” to “engaging in forced abortion.” To read CompassCare’s statement, click [here](#). For further information, click [here](#) and [here](#).
- Republican Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee signed a bill into law that will require a video educating students on fetal development to be shown to students in the State as part of its family life curriculum. HB 2435/SB 2767, the Baby Olivia Act, will require the showing of a video such as Live Action’s video titled, “Meet Baby Olivia,” in classrooms across the State. For further information, click [here](#).

Federal Courts

- On April 24, the Supreme Court heard arguments for whether the federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA), which requires hospitals to provide stabilizing care, conflicts with Idaho’s Defense of Life Act, which only allows abortions in cases of rape, incest, and when “necessary to prevent the death of the pregnant woman.” For further information, click [here](#).
- The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered North Carolina and West Virginia to provide coverage for sex-change operations in a 8-6 decision, stating that refusal to do so would constitute discrimination “on the basis of gender identity and sex.” The court claimed the States violated both the Constitution and federal law. For further information, click [here](#).
- On April 30, the Supreme Court declined the porn industry’s request to block Texas’ age-verification law for pornographic websites while litigation over the law is ongoing. The law merely requires that such websites utilize “reasonable age-verification methods” to ensure that minors are not accessing them. For further information, click [here](#).
- Florida and several other Republican States have sued the Biden administration’s Department of Education for its recent pro-LGBTQ changes to Title IX, which redefines “sex” as “gender identity,” thus erasing existing boundaries between biological males and females in educational environments. Several universities have refused to follow the new interpretation of Title IX, such as Franciscan University of Steubenville. For further information, click [here](#) and [here](#).

National

- Senate Minority Leader, Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell, KY, said that he would not advocate for a federal 15-week abortion ban, stating that he found it unlikely to

pass. He said there would need to be 60 senators supporting such a bill for it to overcome the filibuster. For further information, click [here](#).

- The U.S. bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty has issued a statement to criticize the Biden administration's amendment of the nondiscrimination clause of the Affordable Care Act, removing the word "sex" by itself and replacing it with "sex (including discrimination on the basis of sex characteristics, including intersex traits; pregnancy or related conditions; sexual orientation; gender identity; and sex stereotypes)." For further information, click [here](#).

International

- The Finnish supreme court will hear a hate speech case against a parliamentary woman who is a devout Lutheran, for publicly expressing that marriage is between a man and a woman. For further information, click [here](#).
- South Korea's National Assembly is comprised of 80 Catholics out of its 300-deputy membership as of the country's latest elections. For further information, click [here](#).
- The member-nations of the World Health Organization are preparing to meet in this month to discuss expanding the power of the United Nations to regulate national governments during "health emergencies." Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) calls the move "an absolute affront to our sovereignty." For further information, click [here](#).

Of Note

- A recent CDC report showed that birth rates dropped to 54.4 births per 1,000 women aged 15 through 44, with only 3.6 million babies born in 2023. This marks a 2% decline, bringing the national birth rate to record lows. For further information, click [here](#).
- Heartbeat International has pointed out that the pro-life movement must increase outreach speed via telehealth to overtake telehealth prescriptions of chemical abortion pills. It was pointed out that only 2% of the movement was engaged in telehealth. For further information, click [here](#).
- Ethicist Charles Camosy pointed out that a lack of consensus on what constitutes "brain death" has led to a default policy of harvesting the organs of patients still living. He noted that it particularly affects those with less education for exploitative ends. To read his op-ed, click [here](#). For further information, click [here](#).

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