



NEWS

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“Pregnant women need our assistance now so that abortion is not promoted to them as their only choice”

CARDINAL RIGALI PRAISES HOUSE RE-INTRODUCTION OF “PREGNANT WOMEN SUPPORT ACT,” URGES CO-SPONSORSHIP

WASHINGTON—Cardinal Rigali, chair of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), wrote to all U.S. Representatives urging them to co-sponsor the Pregnant Women Support Act (PWSA, H.R. 2035) re-introduced in the House by Rep. Lincoln Davis (D-TN) on April 22. The PWSA provides resources and support for pregnant and parenting women and their families.

“The Pregnant Women Support Act reaches out to women with a helping hand when they are most vulnerable, and most engaged in making a decision about life or death for their unborn children,” Cardinal Rigali said.

The Cardinal said that the PWSA offers “an authentic common ground, an approach that people can embrace regardless of their position on other issues.”

“There are some statements that almost everyone can endorse. First, the fact that over a million abortions take place every year in this country is a tragedy, and we should at least take steps to reduce abortions,” said Cardinal Rigali.

“Second, no woman should ever have to undergo an abortion because she feels she has no other choice, or because alternatives were unavailable or not made known to her. An abortion performed under such social and economic duress meets no one’s standard for ‘freedom of choice,’” the Cardinal continued.

Among other provisions, the PWSA will ensure that pregnant women are not denied coverage by insurance companies; establish a toll-free number for resources during pregnancy and after birth; provide life-affirming pregnancy services and parenting education in maternity group homes and other centers; provide new mothers with free home visits by registered nurses; and codify the current regulation allowing states to provide State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) coverage to unborn children and their mothers. It will also encourage adoption by expanding adoption tax credit and adoption assistance programs.

Cardinal Rigali distinguished the Pregnant Women Support Act from controversial proposals involving pregnancy prevention, which raise serious policy questions and in many studies have been shown not to reduce abortions. "Discussion of pregnancy prevention and related issues will surely continue inside and outside Congress. In the meantime, pregnant women need our assistance *now* so that abortion is not promoted to them as their *only* choice....I hope you will join Representative Davis in ensuring that the Pregnant Women Support Act will be considered and enacted by this Congress," he said.

The full text of Cardinal Rigali's letter is available at:
www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/women/PWSAHouse09.pdf.

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