



Massachusetts Catholic Conference
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LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

To: Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities

From: James F. Driscoll, Esq., Executive Director

Re: House Bill 104, *“An Act to lift the cap on kids”*

Senate Bill 37, *“An Act relative to the well-being and care of a child”*

Date: March 5, 2019

The Massachusetts Catholic Conference (“MCC”) respectfully submits this testimony in support of House Bill 104, “An Act to lift the cap on kids” and Senate Bill 37, “An Act relative to the well-being and care of a child”

The MCC assists the Bishops of the four Roman Catholic Dioceses in the Commonwealth by giving witness to spiritual values in public affairs. Under the direction of the Archbishop of Boston, and the Bishops of Fall River, Springfield, and Worcester, the MCC undertakes to –

- Apply church teaching to public policies and procedures affecting the common good of all Massachusetts residents;
- Speak for the Roman Catholic Church in Massachusetts before all branches of the government and before all groups concerned with social policy;
- Identify needs in the areas of morality, health, welfare, education, human and civil rights, and determine ways to meet those needs;
- Foster public understanding of the Church’s teaching on social issues.

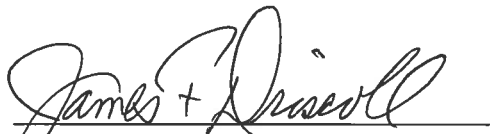
From the beginning, the MCC has concerned itself with social issues affecting the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of all human lives. That Massachusetts statute that denies an incremental increase in financial aid for a child conceived while the family is receiving assistance is fundamentally wrong and inhumane.

- It pressures pregnant women to consider abortion.
- It violates two pillars of Catholic social teaching: reverence for life and economic justice.

- It denies the humanity of the child who is born and deprives the child, and the child's older siblings, of basic necessities.

The MCC was very disappointed that the Legislature's repeal of this law last year did not go into effect. We must provide spiritual and financial support to the least among us. For these reasons we urge the Committee to fully support these bills, make the repeal retroactive to January 1, 2019, and move the Bills quickly towards passage. It is long overdue to provide the financial support to families who desperately need it and are suffering as a result of years of inaction on this issue.

Thank you for your consideration. Again, I urge the Committee to act swiftly on this very important legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Driscoll". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

James F. Driscoll
Executive Director