

**KNIGHTS  
OF COLUMBUS**  
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

**MAINE STATE COUNCIL**  
Jon R. Harvey, State Deputy

Testimony to the Committee on Judiciary

RE: L.D. 1343, H.P.0857; and L.D. 1619, H.P. 1044

Good afternoon Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Jon Harvey, the State Deputy of the State of Maine Knights of Columbus. On behalf of the approximately 7,000 members of the State of Maine Knights of Columbus, I am here to strongly oppose the passage of L.D. 1343, and the companion bill, L.D. 1619.

These bills are tantamount to abortion on demand, requiring only the approval of a physician. Any abortion is fundamentally at odds with the faith of the Catholic Church. Our faith teaches us that all life is sacred from conception to natural death. Our faith teaches us that abortion is a particularly egregious sin for these reasons.

In March of 1995, then Pope John Paul II issued what is known as the *Evangelium Vitae*, translated the *Culture of Life*. The Holy Father, after consultation with the College of Cardinals and the unanimous consent of all of the Bishops of the Catholic Church confirmed the Church's teaching of a "precise and vigorous reaffirmation of the value of human life and its inviolability." Pope John Paul II denounced "the proliferation and increased intensity of threats to life, especially when life is weak and defenseless at its very beginning and at its end: abortion, immoral experimentation on human embryos, euthanasia." His eminence explained that the claim of individual freedom distorts the society's nature and the purpose of a constitutional state by creating the risk of detachment from its moral foundations and linked to an unlimited ethical relativism that creates the basis for the strong to prey on the weak.

Our faith comes to the decisive question:

Why is life a good? Why is it always a good? The answer is simple and clear: because it is a gift from the Creator, who breathed into man the divine breath, thus making the human person the image of God. While sin darkens life by threatening it with death and throwing into doubt its nature as a gift, redemption, achieved in the incarnation, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, redeems its worth, lifting it up to unheard-of heights in the prospect of the gift of eternal life. Gratuitously the Father calls each individual, in his Son, to partake of the fullness of divine life by becoming "sons and daughters in the Son." The sublime dignity of human life thus shines forth not only in the light of its origin, but even more so in the light of its destiny.

In contrast, God commands us, "You shall not kill." Our Church teaches that the "direct and voluntary taking of all innocent human life is "always gravely immoral."

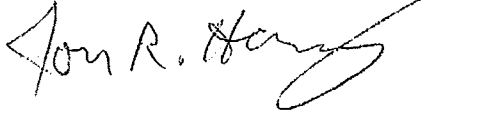
In its explanation of the *Evangelium Vitae*, the Vatican writes:

"The legal norms legitimizing abortion . . . which are radically opposed to justice, the common good and the fundamental rights of the individual, lack authentic juridical validity. In the face of these laws, the right to conscientious objection at least must be recognized, this being a serious

obligation for the Christian, who cannot formally cooperate in evil. Consequently, there remains the commitment of everyone to promote more just legislation, which will change laws contrary to the right to life and its inviolability."

The Knights of Columbus and our families embrace the Pope's vision of a culture of life. As you consider these bills, I encourage you to read the Evangelium Vitae or the Vatican's summary which may be found at <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=5060>. We seek a culture that shows respect for the dignity of every individual, especially the weakest among us. It is our prayer that you will join us in that effort and reject the effort to authorize abortion on demand.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon R. Harvey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Jon Harvey, State Deputy  
Maine Knights of Columbus

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