



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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Missouri Pro-Abortion Ballot Initiative

Ballot Language

Constitutional Amendment to Article I, Relating to Reproductive Health Care, version 10, 2024-086

Official Ballot Title as Certified by Secretary of State on Nov. 28, 2023

“Do you want to amend the Missouri Constitution to:

- establish a right to make decisions about reproductive health care, including abortion and contraceptives, with any governmental interference of that right presumed invalid;
- remove Missouri’s ban on abortion;
- allow regulation of reproductive health care to improve or maintain the health of the patient;
- require the government not to discriminate, in government programs, funding, and other activities, against persons providing or obtaining reproductive health care; and allow abortion to be restricted or banned after Fetal Viability except to protect the life or health of the woman?

State governmental entities estimate no costs or savings, but unknown impact. Local governmental entities estimate costs of at least \$51,000 annually in reduced tax revenues. Opponents estimate a potentially significant loss to state revenue.”

- Link to Official Ballot Title (summary above):
<https://www.sos.mo.gov/petitions/2024IPCirculation#2024086>
- Link to Full Text: <https://www.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/Elections/Petitions/2024-086.pdf>

Preaching Talking Points

1. What is the Missouri Pro-Abortion Ballot Initiative?

It is an attempt by pro-abortion groups to put forth a ballot measure that would add language to the Missouri Constitution in the form of an amendment that would legalize abortion throughout all stages of pregnancy.

- *What are the pro-abortion groups doing to get the proposed change to the constitution on a fall 2024 ballot?*
They are in the process of collecting signatures on a petition throughout Missouri. They need to collect approximately 172,000 total valid signatures from registered voters in six out of eight congressional districts.
- *If the measure is successful once placed on the ballot during the general election, what does it mean for Missouri citizens?*

It would place a right to abortion in the state constitution and would nullify all current state pro-life and parental notification laws.

2. What Does the Slogan “Decline to Sign” Mean?

- If approached to sign anything, read the petition summary on the front or the actual language on the back before you sign any initiative petition. After reading, you can just say, “No, thank you.”
- Don’t take for granted what the signature gatherers tell you. In other states, voters have been asked to sign petitions to protect “women’s health” or even that it is “pro-life!” **No pro-life groups in Missouri are collecting signatures for an initiative petition**, so don’t be fooled. And don’t fall for the trick of “you can sign it, but still vote against it later.”
- No one should participate in abortion to any degree, and it is morally wrong to help put it on the ballot so that others can vote in favor of it.

3. Why We as Catholics Must Not Sign and Allow This to Happen

- **The humanity of the preborn, the dignity of the human person, and the sacredness of each human being in God's eyes is at the center of what we as Catholics must accept as truth.**
- We are called to defend life by standing up against the proposed ballot initiative to put a so-called right to abortion in the Missouri Constitution.

4. The Catholic Church is Committed to Mothers and Children

- **Priests and deacons speaking about the value of human life from the pulpit can help Catholics hear and understand why the Church's teaching is both pro-woman and pro-life.**
- They can help counter the popular misconception that the pro-life position is merely anti-abortion, not caring about women and their children past the time of birth.
- Many Catholics are unaware of the countless ministries and agencies in the Church that support women, children, and their families throughout the stages of life. Help educate them.
- The Church's pastoral response will continue to focus on the needs of women facing unexpected or challenging pregnancies. We must and will answer Pope Francis' repeated challenge to go to the margins and bring help to those in need.
- Partner with your parish respect life coordinator/ministry on various Walking with Moms and Walking with Families St. Louis efforts.

5. The Church's Compassionate Response to Those Wounded by Abortion Changes Hearts and Saves Lives

- Research shows that by the age of 45, as many as one in three women have had an abortion, and a similar number of men and family members have been involved.
- Sadly, these numbers generally remain consistent for both Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Many Catholics who have participated in abortion believe they have committed the "unforgiveable sin."
- **However, the Church does not abandon women and men who have experienced abortion and then find themselves in spiritual, emotional, and psychological turmoil.**
- **In your preaching you can be a unique channel of God's mercy** and invite them to the *Sacrament of Reconciliation*, or to reach out to the *Abortion Healing Ministry of the Archdiocese of St. Louis*. The ministry offers hope, healing, and spiritual renewal through Jesus Christ to women, men, and couples who suffer after participating in abortion.

Sample Prayers of the Faithful

For the legal protection of preborn children and for loving support for their mothers, that they may be respected and cared for according to their God given dignity;

We pray to the Lord.

May all who suffer from participating in an abortion turn to God's loving forgiveness and mercy;

We pray to the Lord.

For all public servants, including those that hold public office, that they may find the wisdom, humility, and courage to defend all human life, born and preborn;

We pray to the Lord.

For the defeat of pro-abortion attacks on life in Missouri;

We pray to the Lord.

Suggested Concluding Prayer for Prayers of the Faithful

Prayer for Radical Solidarity

O Blessed Mother, at the angel's word you went in haste to the aid of your cousin Elizabeth. Although pregnant yourself, you placed her needs before your own.

By your example of radical solidarity, teach us to reverence and protect those in need, without conditions or expectations. Ask your Son to give us unfailing determination to witness to the profound dignity of every person, at every stage and in every circumstance.

In that first Eucharistic procession, you carried Jesus to Elizabeth in her time of need. Obtain for us the grace to bring Christ to any expectant mother who is alone and afraid.

May our support help them to find hope and strength in the Lord. Amen.

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* Prayer cards: <https://www.respectlife.org/prayer-for-radical-solidarity>

Optional Prayer Prior to or at the Conclusion of Mass

Prayer to Defeat the Missouri Pro-Abortion Ballot Initiative

Dear Gracious God,

By Your hand we received the gift of life at the moment of conception.

Through the working of the Holy Spirit, You call us to live out our faith even in the midst of a troubled world. You call us to proclaim the truth of the Gospel of Life and Your love to all around us.

We ask you to bless us as we share Your teachings on the dignity of all human life, especially the preborn and their mothers.

Give us strength of heart and mind. Do not allow us to be discouraged as we make our voices heard to proclaim Your teachings that are now being threatened.

Give us a clear voice as we work to overcome the trial before us for the sake of all people in Missouri.

We ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* Prayer cards forthcoming from the Respect Life Apostolate.



Supported by the Annual Catholic Appeal