

Funding for Abortion Alternatives

The Texas Catholic Conference *supports state funding to abortion alternative providers.*

It is the task of law to pursue a reform of society and of conditions of life in all milieux, starting with the most deprived, so that always and everywhere it may be possible to give every child coming into this world a welcome worthy of a person. Help for families and for unmarried mothers, assured grants for children, a statute for illegitimate children and reasonable arrangements for adoption - a whole positive policy must be put into force so that there will always be a concrete, honorable and possible alternative to abortion. (*Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration on Procured Abortion*)

A Texas Bishop Speaks:

"Hope is communicated because we seek to be a people that are willing to do what is necessary to help someone in need. In the case of the pregnancy center, to do what is necessary to help two people in need, both the mother and the child. The mother needs a light of support, a word of hope, and good counsel; the child needs a chance to survive."



-Bishop Daniel Flores, Diocese of Brownsville

Church Teaching

- ★ I express my deep appreciation for all those social and pastoral initiatives aimed at combating the socio-economic and cultural mechanisms which lead to abortion, and are openly concerned to defend life and to promote the reconciliation and healing of those harmed by the tragedy of abortion. Initiatives aimed at protecting the essential and primary values of life, beginning at conception, and of the family based on the indissoluble marriage between a man and a woman, help to respond to some of today's most insidious and dangerous threats to the common good. Such initiatives represent, alongside numerous other forms of commitment, essential elements in the building of the civilization of love. (*Pope Benedict XVI, Celebration of the Word with Social Pastoral Care Organizations*)
- ★ [We] promote a culture of life by supporting laws and programs that encourage childbirth and adoption over abortion and by addressing poverty, providing health care, and offering other assistance to pregnant women, children, and families. (*USCCB, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*)
- ★ A general and no less serious responsibility lies with those who have encouraged the spread of an attitude of sexual permissiveness and a lack of esteem for motherhood, and with those who should have ensured-but did not-effective family and social policies in support of families, especially larger families and those with particular financial and educational needs. (*Pope John Paul II, Evangelium Vitae*)
- ★ Catholic teaching affirms the right to life for every person- born and unborn- and insists every life is sacred and has inherent dignity. The Bishops' Conference consistently and unequivocally supports laws and programs that encourage childbirth and adoption over abortion and that work to address poverty, provide health care, and offer other assistance to pregnant women, children, and families. (*USCCB, Policy Paper for Pregnant Women Support Act*)

Resources

- ★ **US Conference of Catholic Bishops** Abortion page (www.USCCB.org/prolife/issues/abortion/)
- ★ **Second Look Project** (www.SecondLookProject.org)
- ★ **Texas Pregnancy Care Network** (www.TexasPregnancy.org)

The Texas Catholic Conference (TCC) is the association of the 15 Roman Catholic dioceses of the State of Texas, and is the Official Public Policy Voice of the Catholic Bishops of Texas.

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The Texas Catholic Conference supports state funding for abortion alternatives providers such as the Gabriel Project and Catholic Charities, who offer true guidance to women in overwhelming pregnancies and aid in decreasing the number of abortions in Texas.

Abortion Alternative Providersⁱ

Abortion alternative providers, also known as pregnancy care centers, are social service agencies that offer alternatives to abortion. They generally provide free pregnancy tests, unbiased options counseling, referrals to obstetricians and gynecologists as well as material support in the form of baby clothes, furniture, formula, diapers and maternity clothes.

The Texas Health and Human Services department currently funds the Texas Alternative to Abortion Services Program, of which the primary contractor is the currently Texas Pregnancy Care Network (TPCN). TPCN is a non-profit, charitable organization that is committed to assisting women in crisis pregnancies by providing free and compassionate, practical and life-affirming services. TPCN goals are to promote a woman's physical and mental well-being during her pregnancy and postnatal period; to improve the physical well-being of the unborn child and the newborn; and to encourage adoption as an option for women who are unable to parent.

Reasons for Abortionⁱⁱ

Below are some reasons women listed for why they had their abortions. These reasons and more can be addressed by abortion alternatives providers to help a woman find a way to feel comfortable having her child.

- 42% unmarried
- 38% would interfere with education/job/career
- 38% have completed childbearing
- 34% student or planning to study
- 28% can't afford baby and child care
- 22% don't feel mature enough to raise a child
- 22% unemployed
- 14% not enough support from husband or partner
- 1% was a victim of rape
- <0.5% became pregnant as a result of incest

(Last updated August 17, 2010, 82nd Legislative Session)

Mary's Story

After becoming pregnant, Mary's husband left her. Homeless and without medical care, she was very concerned about her children and her pregnancy.

When Mary called the Pro-Life Help Line, she was living out of her car, had no job, nowhere to live, no driver's license, and no gas money. She didn't even know how far along her pregnancy was. The phone line angel told Mary about the Gabriel Project Life Center.

At the Life Center, Mary received maternity clothes, shoes, baby clothes, and toiletries, as well as information about agencies that could provide additional assistance. During her pregnancy and after the birth of the baby, Mary came numerous times to the Gabriel Project Life Center to receive emotional support, attend pregnancy and parenting classes and to receive material assistance.

Soon, Mary found an apartment, obtained a Driver's License, and saw a doctor for the first time. Mary continued to struggle. Her mother was diagnosed with brain cancer and Mary began experiencing pregnancy complications. Four months later, Mary gave birth to a beautiful healthy baby boy. After the birth, she worked hard to find a job, and by December, found a managerial position at a large department store.

The Gabriel Project was truly concerned for me and my children, and was understanding of my situation and hardships. They helped me through my pregnancy. - Mary

ⁱ Kramlich, Maureen. "Crisis Pregnancy Centers Provide Real Choices." *Life Issues Forum*. 26 Oct. 2001. USCCB Pro-Life Activities.

<www.usccb.org/prolife/publicat/lifeissues/102601.shtml>.

ⁱⁱ "The Second Look Project." Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, USCCB. <www.secondlookproject.org/>.