



# ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

## Office of Communications and Planning

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Archbishop Carlson Responds to Passage of Board Bill 203

**ST. LOUIS** – Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson, Archbishop of St. Louis, released the following statement in response to the St. Louis Board of Aldermen passing Board Bill 203:

The passage of Board Bill 203 by the St. Louis City Board of Aldermen is a terrible moment for a city with such a proud history. A history that includes the Dred Scott case which determined the legality of personal freedom. As a city resident and the leader of the oldest organized religion in the region, I am outraged that the City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen has now enshrined into law an ordinance which creates a “sanctuary” for the despicable practice of abortion. In other words, the laws of the City of St. Louis now actively protect and promote the killing of unborn children, children who, like those who denied Dred Scott his humanity, will be denied their humanity and very existence.

By approving Board Bill 203, the City of St. Louis has chosen to continue down a path of promoting death, repression, resentment, division, and selfishness instead of promoting life, unity, charity, freedom, and goodness. This horrible piece of legislation will now force city residents to be unwilling participants in the abortion business by requiring business owners and individuals to tacitly approve any “reproductive health” decisions made by their employees or tenants.

As Catholics, we know that all life is a gift from God and our parents, and must be protected at any cost. Sadly, legal protection for those members of the human family waiting to be born in this country was removed by the Supreme Court in 1973. Now, some of our St. Louis politicians have made a protected class out of “reproductive health,” which is merely a politically correct euphemism for abortion. If these politicians are concerned about women and children, I challenge them to state so directly and stop hiding behind cheap rhetoric.

Let me be perfectly clear: the Archdiocese of St. Louis and its affiliated agencies and ministries will not comply with Board Bill 203. We will take legal action to defend our religious liberty, and the constitutionally-protected right of religious liberty of businesses, individuals, and other non-faith-based organizations who will be hampered as this oppressive law is imposed upon them.

As I have followed the debate about Board Bill 203 in the Board of Aldermen, one critical point has been overlooked: the lives of the babies in their mother’s wombs that are in peril. The passage of this vile bill has been mistakenly heralded as a success for women by misguided organizations like NARAL and Planned Parenthood. The passage of this bill is not a milestone of our city’s success. It is, rather, a marker of our city’s embrace of the culture of death.

It is my hope and prayer that the City of St. Louis will someday soon rediscover the greatness that awaits if we would simply act in the interest of supporting life, in all its forms, from conception until natural death; to this vision I am committed. I welcome anyone, from any faith background, color, creed, or nationality, to join me in supporting, promoting, and protecting children, women, families, and life itself. In this invitation, I echo the words of Pope St. John Paul II: “Life will be victorious!”

**#CatholicSTL**