

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Renewed Statement of Principles

June 24, 2023

One year ago, the United States Supreme Court — including five Justices who are or were raised Catholic — issued its decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. Overturning nearly fifty years of precedent set in *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the Justices stripped women of their right to abortion and escalated an ongoing reproductive healthcare crisis in this country.

Today, as Catholic Democrats serving in the House of Representatives, we are proud that we are part of the faithful pro-choice Catholic majority — 68 percent of whom supported the legal protections for abortion access enshrined in *Roe* and 63 percent of whom think abortion should be legal in all or most cases. Our faith unfailingly promotes the common good, prioritizes the dignity of every human being, and highlights the need to provide a collective safety net to our most vulnerable.

We are committed to making real the basic principles at the heart of Catholic social teaching: helping the poor, disadvantaged, and the oppressed; protecting the least among us; and ensuring that all Americans of every faith are given meaningful opportunities to share in the blessings of this great country. We recognize that bans and restrictions on abortion disproportionately harm those who already endure poverty, discrimination, and racism. Our values demand that we dismantle economic insecurity, gender inequality, and systemic racism.

As Catholics, we believe all individuals are free to make their own personal decisions about their bodies, families, and futures. The role of informed conscience is at the very core of our faith. The Catechism of the Catholic Church plainly states that “A human being must always obey the certain judgment of his [or her] conscience. If he [or she] were deliberately to act against it, he [or she] would condemn himself [or herself].” We regard conscience as both a sacred gift and a responsibility: we are called to follow our conscience.

We believe the separation of church and state means allowing for our faith to inform our public duties and how we best serve our constituents — not that we impose our religious beliefs and customs on others who may not share them. As legislators, we are charged with being facilitators of the Constitution which guarantees religious freedom for all Americans. Catholic teaching honors religious pluralism, declaring that the right to practice one's religious beliefs must be protected, as well as the right to be free from the religious beliefs of others. Our faith and our country's Constitution demand that no person impose a single religious viewpoint into law or regulation.

Ultimately, as Catholic Democrats who embrace the vocation and mission of the laity as expressed by the late Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*, we believe that the Church is the “people of God,” called to be a moral force in the broadest sense. We believe the Church as a community is called to be in the vanguard of creating a more just

America and world.

The fundamental tenets of our Catholic faith — social justice, conscience, and religious freedom — compel us to defend a woman’s right to access abortion. We are committed to advocating for the respect and protection of those making the decision if and when to have children.

Rosa L. DeLauro
Pete Aguilar
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Greg Casar
Joaquin Castro
Gerald E. Connolly
Joe Courtney
Madeleine Dean
Mark DeSaulnier
Debbie Dingell
Anna G. Eshoo
Adriano Espaillat
Jesús “Chuy” García
Robert Garcia
Sylvia R. Garcia
Jimmy Gomez

Val Hoyle
John B. Larson
Susie Lee
Stephen F. Lynch
Betty McCollum
James McGovern
Kevin Mullin
Grace F. Napolitano
Bill Pascrell
Nancy Pelosi
Andrea Salinas
Mike Thompson
Paul Tonko
Lori Trahan
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