



MEDIA STATEMENT

Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB, Archbishop of Perth

Dated: 20 June 2023

Subject: Response to Western Australian Government's intention to introduce legislation to make access to abortion easier.

"Recent reports in the media concerning the government's intention to introduce legislation to make access to abortion easier, while reportedly based on a consultation process which indicated broad public support for such a move, will nevertheless be distressing for many people.

The conviction that abortion brings to an end the life of a completely innocent and defenseless unborn human person lies at the heart of this distress. Life is simply too precious to be destroyed in this way. This is certainly the position of the Catholic Church: it is one which is shared by many who belong to other religious traditions and by people who hold no religious beliefs.

The right of doctors and other health professionals to be free of coercion in relation to the provision of abortions, when such coercion violates their conscientious beliefs, is also precious. To force a doctor, by law, to refer a patient to a medical practitioner whom the doctor knows will agree to perform the abortion, is to force the doctor to be complicit in a procedure which she or he believes to be immoral. Secular societies which truly believe in fundamental human rights do not seek to force people to act in violation of their ethical or religious beliefs.

Those who are not supportive of abortion, and probably many of those who are, would agree that a decision to terminate a pregnancy is very often a difficult and even agonising decision to make. Very few women would make such a decision easily. We should be very wary of judging or condemning anyone. As a community, however, we might do better to consider how we can rebuild our society in such a way as to make more life-giving and life-affirming options available to those who find the realisation that they are pregnant such a distressing and alarming experience".

Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB
Catholic Archbishop of Perth.

Media enquiries should be directed to:
Brett Mendez, Media Manager,
Catholic Archdiocese of Perth
Mobile: 0448 791 661
Email: brett.mendez@perthcatholic.org.au