



**Comments delivered at Michigan Values Life Press Conference
Wednesday, June 26, 2019**

I am Rebecca Mastee, with the Michigan Catholic Conference, which is the official Public Policy voice of the Catholic Church in the state. We, too, stand in support of the Michigan Values Life initiative and are happy to be partnering with Right to Life to end dismemberment abortion.

Dismemberment abortion (also referred to as Dilation and Evacuation (D&E)) is a particularly gruesome later-term abortion procedure which deserves no place in civilized society. This procedure literally tears apart a *live* fetus, a *living* baby in the womb. It dismembers the unborn limb by limb and removes each of its body parts individually while the baby effectively bleeds to death.

Many reasons exist to end this practice of dismemberment abortion. Recall that as a society, we have already agreed that there is no need to allow for partial-birth abortion. The partial-birth procedure has been banned now for a number of years at both the state and federal level. The U.S. Supreme Court even considered, and ultimately upheld, the partial-birth abortion ban. In doing so, this court highlighted the similar brutality exhibited by both the dismemberment and partial-birth abortion procedures. Likewise, the Michigan Values Life initiative recognizes the similarities and amends the state's partial-birth abortion ban to include a ban on the dismemberment procedure as well.

This petition is important because abortion procedures are brutal – and women deserve better. There are many who have suffered post-abortion trauma. We know that abortion hurts women, sometimes physically, sometimes emotionally, sometimes mentally.

Consider again that the dismemberment procedure involves a *living* being. When specifically discussing D&E abortion, the pro-abortion National Abortion Federation's textbook, which teaches how to perform abortions, admits that "patients may find solace in knowing that fetal death occurred prior to operative evacuation."¹

Knowing, or later learning, that a dismemberment abortion was conducted on a living fetus could exacerbate post-abortion trauma in some women. Instead, let us focus on supporting women: by ending dismemberment abortion and prioritizing alternatives to abortion.

We encourage participation in this important initiative, which values life and upholds the dignity of both women and the unborn. Together, we look forward to ending dismemberment abortion in our state.

¹ Management of Unintended and Abnormal Pregnancy: Comprehensive Abortion Care, pg 166 (2009).