



FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
The nonpartisan public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Florida

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Testimony in Support of SB 918 (Flores) - Prohibiting Abortion of a Viable Fetus

*Provided to Senate Health Policy Committee
by Ingrid M. Delgado, Associate for Social Concerns/Respect Life
April 1, 2014*

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, Senators.

My name is Ingrid Delgado. I am the Associate for Social Concerns and Respect Life for the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Catholic Bishops' unwavering opposition to abortion is well known, recognizing the sanctity of life in all its stages beginning at conception.

However, we believe that the proposed prohibition of abortion at viability can unite Floridians regardless of where they consider themselves in the abortion debate, agreeing that viable children should not be aborted.

As Sen. Flores has presented, the Supreme Court has held that the state may prohibit abortion at the point of viability. While the state of Florida currently prohibits abortion in the third trimester, third trimester and 24 weeks are not synonymous with viability.

Thanks to advances in medicine and technology, children are surviving outside of the womb before 24 weeks. The Florida Department of Health reported 375 live births in 2012 weighing under 500 grams (approximately 1.1lbs). Children are surviving earlier in development, and this bill simply requires a physician to, in good faith medical judgment, determine if an unborn child is viable so as to safeguard our state from terminating the lives of children who would have been capable of surviving outside of the mother's womb.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration, committee members. I urge your favorable support.