



DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON · DIOCESE OF RICHMOND
Representing the Virginia Catholic Bishops in Public Policy Matters

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Statement on Proposed Abortion Center Regulations By Jeff Caruso, Executive Director, Virginia Catholic Conference

Abortion is not health care because it ends lives rather than healing them. The existence of the abortion industry under the guise of "health care" is, however, a sad and tragic reality in our Commonwealth and our country. Given this reality, the abortion industry should, and indeed must, be required to meet reasonable, commonsense health and safety standards to protect women's health.

The Virginia Catholic Conference and partnering pro-life organizations have long sought to require abortion centers be licensed and regulated, and advocates for abortion centers have long opposed even the most minimal of standards. This year, pro-life groups, including the Conference, supported SB 924 to require the Board of Health to issue regulations governing abortion centers. The Conference was pleased to see the enactment of this legislation and is now pleased to see the very sensible emergency regulations presented to the Board of Health by medical experts at the Department of Health.

If adopted, these proposed regulations would be a much needed improvement in our Commonwealth's policies. It is simply common sense to say that abortion centers, for example, should:

- be licensed;
- be subject to state inspections;
- have life-saving equipment on hand;
- have written policies regarding infection prevention, fire safety, and the use of ultrasounds; and
- be required to report patient deaths resulting from abortion procedures.

These items and so many others contained in the proposal deserve strong support from those who consider themselves pro-life and those who consider themselves pro-choice. Indeed, it is hard to imagine why groups that say they are concerned about women's health would oppose these standards.