DIOCESE OF SAN JOSE

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

February 2009

Dear Friends,

For a number of years, the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) has been introduced in Congress. This law, if enacted, would eliminate practically all restrictions on abortion. We do not know if FOCA will be reintroduced in the new session of Congress; however, the **risk** that it **might** is reason enough for us to act at this time, so that our representatives in Washington, D.C., can hear our voices. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has developed a postcard campaign to inform Congress and to educate the public about this grave threat to the common good. Today, I am asking you to take a few moments to share with our Senators and Representatives your conviction that the passage of FOCA would seriously threaten the welfare of our nation by using the postcards available at the parish.

This postcard includes the following message:

> *At this time of serious national challenges, Americans should unite to serve the good of all, born and unborn. The Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA), the most radical and divisive pro-abortion bill ever introduced in Congress, would create a "fundamental right" to abortion that government could not limit but would have to support. FOCA would overturn many existing widely supported policies, including laws protecting parental involvement and conscience rights and those preventing partial-birth abortion and taxpayer funding of abortion.*

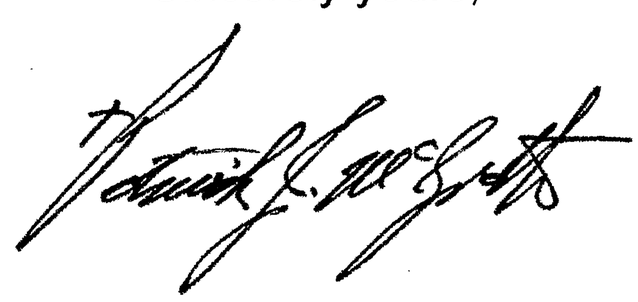
If FOCA were to be signed into law, it would eliminate current "conscientious objection" provisions for hospitals and healthcare workers. This could have severe repercussions for Catholic Healthcare in the United States. In the same way, regardless of their own consciences on the matter, some doctors and other healthcare providers who wish to continue practicing medicine may be required to perform or participate in abortions. Rather than making abortion a rarity, the passage of FOCA would promote this violence against the unborn.

This is not a partisan issue; it is a matter of conscience, in keeping with the principles of our faith. Our nation truly needs to work together in these trying times. Our treatment of the most vulnerable members of our society – the unborn, the poor, the elderly and the ill – will be a true indicator of whether we embrace the lofty principles upon which our nation was founded.

May the Lord of Life shower abundant blessings on you, your families and your loved ones.

With every best wish and kind regard, I remain,

Sincerely yours,



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