

SENATE JUDICIARY  
Exhibit No. 11  
Date 1/30/15  
Bill No. SB 179

January 30, 2015

To: Montana Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Matthew C. Brower, Executive Director of the Montana Catholic Conference

Re: Testimony in opposition to SB 179

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Matt Brower [B R O W E R] and I currently serve as the Executive Director of the Montana Catholic Conference. The Montana Catholic Conference serves as the public policy arm of the Roman Catholic Church in Montana and I speak on behalf of the two Roman Catholic bishops in Montana from the Diocese of Helena and the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings.

All persons regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation deserve the respect and dignity that is theirs as human beings and should be treated with the same compassion and love to which all persons are entitled. At the same time, we also affirm religious freedom and rights of conscience as foundational principles of a just society.

While the Roman Catholic Church opposes unjust discrimination in all of its forms and there are some excellent points in this bill that we would affirm, the bill seemingly does not provide adequate protections for those who might object to celebrating by their actions situations that run contrary to their deeply held beliefs.

For this reason, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, on behalf of the Montana Catholic Conference, I urge you to vote no on SB 179 and thank you for your time.