

SENATE JUDICIARY

Exhibit No. 5
Date: 2/18/15
Bill No. HB 197

February 18, 2015

To: Montana Senate Judiciary Committee

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

Re: Testimony in support of HB 197

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.

I am here today to voice our support for House Bill 197.

Just this month, Pope Francis spoke out against the evil of domestic violence against women stating, "Although it is a symbol of life, the female body is unfortunately not rarely attacked and disfigured, even by those who should be its protector and life companion."

Domestic violence is a grave evil all too prevalent in our communities and one which we should all denounce and actively seek to eradicate. It offends the most basic principles of human dignity and tears at the very fabric of society. House Bill 197 takes meaningful steps to address the serious problem of domestic violence against pregnant women.

For many of the reasons that you have heard or will hear today we stand in strong support of House Bill 197. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, on behalf of the Montana Catholic Conference, I urge a "do pass" and thank you for your time.

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