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**Bishop Daniel E. Thomas Statement Regarding
Monday's U.S. Senate Vote on Planned Parenthood**

On Monday, August 3, the U.S. Senate voted down a motion to proceed to a bill that would cut off funding for Planned Parenthood and redirect that funding to women's health organizations. While the vote is a setback in our fight for life, the debate over funding Planned Parenthood will continue this fall. Thus, I urge the Catholics of the Diocese of Toledo and all people of goodwill to continue to work to end the scourge of abortion and protect life. Join me as we continue to raise our voices together by writing or calling your elected representatives in state and national government, asking them to stop the flow of your tax dollars to Planned Parenthood.

Pope Francis has called unborn children "the most defenseless and innocent among us" (The Joy of the Gospel, 213). In recently released videos from the Center for Medical Progress, which expose Planned Parenthood's role in the trafficking of human organs, tissues and body parts, we have become witnesses to the exploitation of our defenseless and innocent unborn brothers and sisters.

This callous disrespect by Planned Parenthood for human life in its most vulnerable form is appalling and morally reprehensible. As Cardinal Sean O'Malley, Chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, has stated:

"The recent news stories concerning Planned Parenthood direct our attention to two larger issues involving many institutions in our society. The first is abortion itself: a direct attack on human life in its most vulnerable condition. The second is the now standard practice of obtaining fetal organs and tissues through abortion. Both actions fail to respect the humanity and dignity of human life. This fact should be the center of attention in the present public controversy."

To continue our fight to protect life and take practical action, visit www.ohiohouse.gov or www.ohiosenate.gov to find your local representative and visit www.senate.gov or www.house.gov for your national representatives. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has for many years supported defunding Planned Parenthood, which received more than \$1.3 million in state funds from Ohio and \$500 million in federal funds in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Please also consider supporting pro-life pregnancy centers that provide invaluable services to women in need.

If you have had an abortion or participated in one, we welcome you with love and compassion through our diocesan post-abortion healing ministry, Project Rachel. Our Project Rachel ministry stands ready to offer confidential and caring assistance. Learn more about Project Rachel at <https://catholiccharitiesnwo.org/project-rachel/>.

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