



JAMES R. CUNNINGHAM / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nebraska Catholic Conference

215 CENTENNIAL MALL SOUTH, SUITE 310 / LINCOLN, NE 68508-1813
TELEPHONE (402) 477-7517 / FAX (402) 477-1503

OFFICERS

Most Rev. George J. Lucas
Archbishop of Omaha
President

Most Rev. Fabian W. Bruskewitz
Bishop of Lincoln

Most Rev. William J. Dendinger
Bishop of Grand Island

February 4, 2010

The Nebraska Catholic Conference, an association through which the Archdiocese of Omaha and the Dioceses of Lincoln and Grand Island act upon their mutual interests and concerns relating to matters of public policy, pursuant to the leadership of the three Diocesan Bishops, expresses its deeply felt regret and concern over the recent announcement that many unborn children will become ineligible for prenatal services under Nebraska's medical assistance program. The Conference urges quick and effective restoration of this medical assistance, using whatever public-policy actions are necessary. At stake is the long-term health and well-being of a significant number of the most vulnerable members of Nebraska's human family.

Nebraska has a solid reputation as a pro-life state with strong pro-life leadership. The fact that for many years the unborn children of low-income parents have been able to receive prenatal care through the medical assistance program is a testament to this reputation and leadership. To discontinue any aspect of this policy, thereby leaving any category of unborn children at greater risk of health and development problems, will weaken the foundation upon which this pro-life reputation and leadership are based.

The Nebraska Catholic Conference remains hopeful that there will be a way of administratively combining eligibility for unborn children under the Children's Health Insurance Program with the current medical-assistance framework. Nonetheless, if legislation is necessary to restore and continue this vitally important coverage, then the Conference respectfully urges the Legislature and the Governor to act cooperatively and quickly to ensure enactment of such legislation.