



# PRESS RELEASE

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### **Catholic Medical Association supports Ohio's 'Heartbeat Bill,' commends members who have worked to promote the proposed legislation**

PHILADELPHIA, PA– FEBRUARY 21, 2019 –The Catholic Medical Association today issued its full support of Ohio's "Heartbeat Bill," which is set to be voted on in the near future.

Once passed, the "Heartbeat Bill" will ban abortions after a fetal heartbeat can be detected, usually around 6-8 weeks into a pregnancy.

"In medicine, we place a special emphasis on the heartbeat. At this early stage of development, the heartbeat is indicative of human life," said CMA's Dr. Ashley Fernandes.

Dr. Fernandes, who also serves as a President Trustee for Ohio Right to Life, along with other members of CMA's Central Ohio Guild, are working with Ohio Right to Life and other pro-life groups in the state to get the bill—which will ultimately save lives—passed.

"Our local CMA physicians have written and oral testimony scheduled at the Ohio Statehouse, and we ask for your prayers in the small battle to change the culture in our state to one that supports life," added Dr. Fernandes.

Among those testifying will be Dr. Michael Parker, Vice President of CMA's Board of Directors. Dr. Parker, who lives and practices in Ohio, says "A heartbeat means something. Medically and scientifically, the heartbeat is evidence of the development of the complex human person."

An Ohio Senate hearing on the bill is scheduled for March 5th. If passed, the bill will then go before the House, and finally to Ohio Governor Mike DeWine.

Governor DeWine has promised to sign the Heartbeat Bill into law once passed by state lawmakers. The bill had previously been vetoed twice by former Governor John Kasich.

Several other states, including Mississippi and Kentucky, are looking to pass similar legislation to ban abortions once a fetal heartbeat can be detected.

"The CMA applauds legislative attempts to protect life at all stages and will continue to uphold the dignity of life for the most vulnerable," said Dr. John Schirger, President of CMA.

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*The Catholic Medical Association is a national, physician-led community of over 2,200 healthcare professionals consisting 104 local guilds. CMA's mission is to inform, organize, and inspire its members, in steadfast fidelity to the teachings of the Catholic Church, to uphold the principles of the Catholic faith in the science and practice of medicine.*

Jill Blumenfeld  
Communications Manager  
Catholic Medical Association  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004  
C: 412-398-3001  
W: 484-270-8002 x. 16