

## [ Montana Roman Catholic ] Bishops won't back abortion [ personhood ] measure

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[ Edited, excerpts, emphasis added, all text with brackets [ ] added ]

The [ Roman ] Catholic church in Montana will not support an anti-abortion ballot initiative that would establish conception as the beginning of life and award constitutional rights to embryos [ personhood ].

In a statement issued this week, Montana [ Roman Catholic ] bishops Michael Warfel and George Thomas said Constitutional Initiative 100 is not the best strategy for eliminating abortion.

"We are currently working to develop a broad-based coalition to examine ... alternatives that offer a more realistic approach to the protection of human life," the bishops wrote. "We, the Roman Catholic Bishops of Montana, remain dedicated to the protection of life from conception to natural death."

Supporters had asked the [ Roman ] Catholic church for help in promoting the measure, which would **amend the state constitution to define a person as "a human being at all stages of human development or life, including the state of fertilization,"** said Moe Wosepka, executive director of the Montana [ Roman ] Catholic Conference.

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The initiative was written by Rep. Rick Jore, a Constitution Party member from Ronan and a staunch opponent of abortion.

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He and other proponents of the measure, dubbed the **Montana Personhood Amendment** by supporters, have been gathering signatures to place it on the November ballot.

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**Jore has said the initiative would make abortion illegal in Montana.**

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Wosepka said the [ Roman ] Catholic church appreciates all efforts to reduce the number of abortions in Montana. However, he said the [ Roman Catholic false ] church has identified more effective ways to challenge the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision in the Roe v. Wade case, which affirmed the legality of abortion under a woman's constitutional right to privacy.

"The [ Roman Catholic ] bishops have for many years been active in trying to pass a national amendment to the national constitution," Wosepka said. "They feel that since Roe is a federal issue, an amendment to the federal constitution would be much more effective."

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