STATEMENT: FAITH LEADERS URGE SOUTH DAKOTANS TO REJECT AMENDMENT G

As Christian leaders, we share a responsibility to speak out on Amendment G and warn of the profound danger it poses to women and children in South Dakota. We urge South Dakota voters to reject it.

Women and families facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies need our compassion and practical assistance, not the deadly "solution" offered by Amendment G. This radical proposal would allow abortion through all nine months of pregnancy. While some have claimed that Amendment G permits abortion only in the first trimester, a close inspection of the text clearly reveals that it would, in fact, allow painful, late-term abortions of viable babies who could survive outside the womb. Instead of our constitution safeguarding the weakest and most vulnerable in our society, it would entirely remove all the basic rights of the most defenseless South Dakotans. This is not the kind of "freedom" we want in South Dakota.

Amendment G would undermine parental rights by allowing an abortion to be performed on a teenage minor without her parent's knowledge. It would place women at risk by removing laws that are designed to prevent them from being coerced, usually by an abusive male, into an abortion they do not want. Amendment G would also jeopardize the health of women by eliminating almost all health and safety regulations related to abortion.

As leaders of many different faith communities, we stand united behind the truth that God is the Author of Life, and every life He creates deserves a place at our table. God does not make "mistakes."

The Scriptures, which we together revere as the Word of God, bear clear witness to the inestimable value of unborn children. The psalmist proclaims, "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:13). We affirm the intrinsic dignity of unborn human life, which has been revealed by Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, who entered the world in the form of a tiny, helpless child in His mother's womb.

It has often been said that a society will be judged by how it treats its weakest and most vulnerable members. Surely, among these are unborn girls and boys. We must protect them and their mothers from the terrible consequences of Amendment G. This measure violates the fundamental values of our state constitution, which guarantees the right to life for all persons (Article VI, Section 1).

In the Book of Deuteronomy God tell us, "...I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live..." (30:19). We therefore exhort our fellow Christians and all South Dakotans to oppose Amendment G. Choose life by voting "no" on Amendment G.

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