

# Bioethics Public Policy Report January 2025

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The Bioethics Public Policy Report is a collaboration between dioceses, parishes, Knights of Columbus councils, grassroots organizations, and The National Catholic Bioethics Center to inform the laity about developments in bioethics and human dignity.

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## *National*

- The House of Representatives Pro-Life Caucus sent a letter to the US Government Accountability Office asking for an investigation into how much federal funding has been granted to abortion providers in the past three years. One hundred twelve members of Congress signed the letter in a bicameral effort.
- The Biden Administration has backed down from forcing its contraceptive mandate for minors under Title X after Texas challenged the rule. The US Department of Health and Human Services had attempted to nullify state laws requiring parental consent to contraceptives.
- A study from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found a 2 percent decrease in the number of abortions between 2021 and 2022, following the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.



## *Federal Courts*

- Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton filed a brief with the US Supreme Court asking it to uphold Texas's age verification law for pornographic websites. Paxton said in a press release that “[pornography] companies do not have a right to expose children to pornography.”
- The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a case over a Tennessee state law which prohibits transgender surgeries for minors, signaling skepticism as to transgender activists' legal claims that the law constitutes unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex.
- The Supreme Court has decided to take up a case to determine whether the work of Catholic Charities is primarily religious after Wisconsin declared the organization not exempt from employment tax.



## *States*

- A Wyoming state court judge ruled that pro-life laws violate provisions of the state constitution guaranteeing the right to make health care decisions. One law banned abortion in all cases, with exceptions for danger to the mother's life, rape, and incest, and the other outlawed abortions induced by medication.
- In Virginia, the House Privileges and Elections Committee suddenly moved along controversial amendments to the state constitution, which would ensure a right to abortion, repeal the traditional definition of marriage, and restore voting rights for formerly incarcerated felons. Bishop Michael Burbidge of the Diocese of Arlington issued a statement in opposition to the first two, while voicing approval for the restoration of voting rights.
- A Missouri state court judge upheld a statewide ban on transgender procedures for minors. The decision comes as the Supreme Court is preparing to hear arguments for a similar ban in Tennessee.
- Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey has stated that his office will continue to enforce a post-viability ban on abortion following the passage of Amendment 3, which created a right to abortion in the state constitution. Bailey says that the wording of Amendment 3 allows for the government to protect the unborn after viability, and parental consent laws will stay in effect.

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For the full report, visit [www.nbccenter.org/bioethics-public-policy-reports](http://www.nbccenter.org/bioethics-public-policy-reports).