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# NEVADA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

DIOCESE OF LAS VEGAS  
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Mr. Chairman and Members  
Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor

My name is Robert Payant I am speaking on behalf of the Nevada Catholic Conference which is the voice of the two Roman Catholic Dioceses in Nevada.

I speak generally in favor of HB 144, but without an important amendment to the bill, we would oppose it and would ask that it be rejected by this committee. We believe that without amendment, this proposal is a direct assault on freedom of conscience for pharmacists.

The original draft of this bill as proposed by the Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor had, as its central theme, the proposition that a pharmacist would not be disciplined by his or her employer for refusing to fill or refill prescriptions if doing so would violate the individual's conscience. We believe that is consonant with Nevada's high regard for individual conscience in matters of ethics, religious beliefs and morality.

The measure was very substantially amended by the Assembly Committee and ultimately approved in its amended form. Two very good things were done by the amendment and one bad thing that we are asking you to fix.

In Section 1, subsection 2, subparagraph (c), the amendment provides That the pharmacists could refuse to fill a prescription if he or she believed that prescription is contraindicated and requires a notification to the prescribing practitioner. The amendment also added a subsection 3 which clarifies that a pharmacist is not required to stock a particular drug. Both of these changes from the original bill are good and it is my understanding that some pharmacies will not, on moral grounds, stock certain medications.

The part that is missing is the right of the individual pharmacist to decline on moral grounds to fill the prescription if he or she is working in a pharmacy that does choose to stock the drugs which the individual pharmacist declines to sell. We ask that the following language be restored to this bill as Section 1, subsection 2, paragraph (d):

*Filling or refilling the prescription would require the pharmacist to violate a genuine principle or tenet of good conscience held by the pharmacist.*

EXHIBIT D Committee on Commerce/Labor

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