

To honourable members of The National Council of the Slovak Republic,

We, the undersigned NGOs, are writing to ask the Members of the Slovak Parliament to support the Draft Law which Amends and Supplements Act No. 576/2004 Coll. of Laws on Healthcare, Healthcare-related Services.¹

Special protection of women before and after childbirth is part of many international and European treaties.

The protection of life, health and human dignity which this law aims at doing, is a principle vested in international human rights law, as well as multiple international and regional treaties.

Slovakia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990; the preamble of the Convention states the following (emphasis added):

‘[T]he child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, *before* as well as after birth.’

The unborn child is a living human being since the moment of conception. As stated by the European Court of Human Rights in *Vo v. France*, the unborn child ‘belongs to the human race.’² In this capacity, the unborn child is entitled to all human rights as the other members of the human family.

While the right to life is a fundamental human right, there is no right to abortion in international human rights law; in Europe, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights upheld this on numerous occasions. Furthermore, with regard to regulations in the area of access to abortion, the European Court of Human Rights has held that the ‘woman’s right to respect for her private life must be weighed against other competing rights and freedoms invoked including those of the unborn child.’³ This approach has been followed in a multitude of cases.⁴

The maintenance and strengthening of these safeguards, such as a waiting period, and advertising bans, are well within the realm of what is legal, on a domestic scale and certainly under international law. The extension of the waiting period allows for proper consideration and respect – not ‘demeaning women as competent-decision makers’, but rather giving them the necessary time and tools to discern upon a crucial decision to take.

For all these reasons, we strongly encourage the Members of the Slovak Parliament to vote in favour of the legislative proposal, thus upholding the dignity and the right to life of the unborn children, as well as the right of women to take an informed choice.

¹ Draft Law which Amends and Supplements Act No. 576/2004 Coll. of Laws on Healthcare, Healthcare-related Services, and on Amending and Supplementing Certain Acts as Amended, and which Amends and Supplements Certain Acts (Print no. 154, 19.06.2020)

² *Vo v. France*, Application No. 53924/00, European Court of Human Rights Judgment of 08/07/2004 at § 84. ³

Tysiqc v. Poland, Application No. 5410/03, Judgment, 20 March 2007 at § 106 and *Vo v France*, (cited above) at §§ 76- 80 and § 82.

⁴ *Brüggemann and Scheuten v. Germany*, Application No. 6959/75, Commission decision 12 July 1977 at §§ 59, 61. See, *A, B and C v. Ireland*, Application No. 25579/05, Grand Chamber judgment of 16 December 2010 at §§ 222, 227

List of international signatories:

1. 40 Days for Life (Sweden)
2. Abogados por la vida Argentina (Argentina)
3. Actie voor het gezin (België)
4. AES Vida (Spain)
5. Alianza Civica Juvenil y Colectivo por la Vida (United States)
6. Alianza Latinoamericano para la familia (Chile)
7. Ama la Vida (Mexico) ‘
8. Asociación a favor de lo Mejor A.C. (Mexico)
9. Associazione papa Giovanni XXIII (Italy)
10. Asociación de Bioetica Universidad Católica de Valencia (Spain)
11. Asociación de Mujeres Emprendedoras de Durango (Mexico)
12. Asociación Nacional de objeción de Conciencia (Spain)
13. The American Family Association of New York (United States)
14. The American Organization of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists (USA)
15. Association Society and Values (Bulgaria)
16. Bonus Societas (Mexico)
17. Bundesverleben (Germany)
18. C-Fam (United States)
19. The Catholic Family Association ‘Vladimir Ghika’ (Romania)
20. Cefim Cozumel (Mexico)
21. Center for Law, Faith and Family (United States)
22. Centre Catholique International de Coopération avec l’UNESCO (France)
23. Centro de Estudios y Formación Integral de la Mujer (Mexico)
24. Christelijk Gereformeerde Vrouwenbond (Netherlands)
25. The Clapham Institute (Sweden)
26. Cidevida (Spain)
27. Ciencia vida y cultura-civica (Spain)

28. Civil Rights for the Unborn (United States)
29. Comisión Mexicana de Deberes Humanos (Mexico)
30. Comité Pro Vida de Honduras (Honduras)
31. Confédération Nationale des Associations Familiales Catholiques francaises - CNAFC (France)
32. Crossroads Pro-Life (United States)
33. Culture of Life Africa (Nigeria)
34. Diaconia (Romania)
35. Diffendere la vita con Maria (Italy)
36. Dilo Bien Zacatecas (Mexico)
37. Enraizados (Spain)
38. European Center for Law and Justice (France)
39. Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe -FAFCE (Belgium)
40. FairÄndern (Austria)
41. Faith and Future (Bulgaria)
42. FamilienAllianz Österreich (Austria)
43. Familia siempre familia (Mexico)
44. Family Solidarity (Ireland)
45. Federação Portuguesa pela Vida (Portugal)
46. Federación Espanol de la Familia (Spain)
47. Femina Europa (France)
48. Fondation Jérôme Lejeune (France)
49. Foro de la Familia de Beleaes (Spain)
50. Foro Espanol de la Familia (Spain)
51. Foro Universitario Synthesis (Spain)
52. Forum Vitae (Luxembourg)
53. Freedom for ALL (Bulgaria)
54. Frente Nacional por la Familia San Miguel Allende Guanajuato (Mexico)
55. Frente Nacional Profamilia Tijuana (Mexico)
56. Frente Nacional por la Vida (Mexico)
57. Fundación CitizenGo (Spain)
58. Fundación Si a la Vida (El Salvador)
59. Foro de la Familia (Spain)

60. Fundación Internacional Granito de Arena (Mexico)
61. Fundación Más Vida (Spain)
62. Fundación Red Madre (Spain)
63. Hazteoir (Spain)
64. Heartbeat International (United States)
65. Hersteld Hervormde Vrouwenbond (Netherlands)
66. Hervormde Vrouwenbond (Netherlands)
67. Generación con Rumbo/ Generation with Direction (Mexico)
68. Hart voor het gezin (Netherlands)
69. Hnutí Pro Zivot CR (Czech Republic)
70. Human Dignity Center (Hungary)
71. Human Life Alliance (United States)
72. Human Life Review (United States)
73. In the name of the Family (Croatia)
74. Instituto de Gestión para el desarrollo A.C. (Mexico)
75. Instituto Panameño Educación Familiar (Panama)
76. International Right to Life Federation (United States)
77. International Solidarity and Human Rights Institute (United States)
78. Izbor za zhivot (Bulgaria)
79. Jeden z nas (Poland)
80. The Justice Foundation (United States)
81. Kenya Catholic Doctors Association -KCDA (Kenya)
82. KCA School (South Africa)
83. Le Jeune Espana (Spain)
84. Life Matters TV (United States)
85. Life Network Foundation Malta (Malta)
86. Magna Coalición de Lideres Provida (Mexico)
87. Människovärde (Sweden)
88. March for Life Brussels (Belgium)
89. Moimento Italiano per la vita (Italy)
90. Movimiento Salvemos las 2 vidas (Argentina)
91. De Nederlandse Patiëntenvereniging, Zorg voor het Leven (Netherlands)
92. Oevre pour la protection de la vie naissante (Luxembourg)

93. One of Us Federation (Spain)
94. Ordo Juris (Poland)
95. Parliamentary Network for Critical Issues (United States)
96. Plataforma Ciudadana Unidos por la Vida Colombia (Colombia)
97. Platforma civica “Impreuna” (Romania)
98. Precious Life (Ireland)
99. Priests for Life (United States)
100. Profesionales por la Etica (Spain)
101. Pro Vida (Honduras)
102. Provida asociación civil Senora Julieta Athie Flores
103. Pro Vita & Famiglia (Italy)
104. Pro vita Bucharest (Romania)
105. Rachel’s Vineyard (United States)
106. Rally for life (Ireland)
107. REAL Women of Canada (Canada)
108. Red de Apoyo a la Familia (Mexico)
109. Red Mujeres desarrollo, justiciar y Paz AC (Mexico)
110. Respekt-Catholic Movement for Life (Sweden)
111. Right to Life (United Kingdom)
112. Retten til liv (Denmark)
113. Rod International (Bulgaria)
114. Ser Familia Mx (Mexico)
115. Ser Familia Coahuila (Mexico)
116. Service Central Education á la vie (Democratic Republic of Congo)
117. Si a la Vida (Mexico)
118. Si a la Vida, Comunidad de Alianza Jn 17,21 (Mexico)
119. Sociedad Mexicana de Bioética A.C. (Mexico)
120. Somos Más por la vida y la familia (Mexico)
121. Stichting voor Recht zonder Onderscheid, Stirezo (Netherlands)
122. Stichting Katholieke Gezinsweekenden (Netherlands)
123. Stiftung ja zum leben (Germany)
124. Stichting Guido de Bres (Netherlands)
125. Stichting Schreeuw om Leven (Netherlands)

126. Stowarzyszenie obrońców życia człowieka (Poland)
127. Trans-Atlantic Christian Council (Netherlands)
128. Unidas por la Vida Colombia (Colombia)
129. United Families International (United States)
130. Valores y Sociedad (Spain)
131. Vereniging Protestant Nederland (Netherlands)
132. Voz en Acción (Mexico)
133. Vrouwenbond Gereformeerde Gemeenten (Netherlands)
134. World Youth Alliance Europe (Belgium)
135. Za Voda za Pravivo do Zivljenja (Slovenia)

The list of Slovak signatories:

1. Aliancia za život, o.z.
2. Áno pre život, n.o.
3. Asociácia za život a rodinu
4. CitizenGO Slovensko
5. Centrum pre Rodinu Trenčín
6. ELEP - občianske združenie pre prirodzené plánovanie rodičovstva
7. eRko - Hnutie kresťanských spoločenstiev detí
8. Fórum kresťanských inštitúcií
9. Fórum života
10. Gianna
11. Inštitút pre ľudské práva a rodinnú politiku
12. Inštitút rodiny
13. Katolícka jednota Slovenska
14. Klub mnohodetných rodín
15. Kvalita života, FMK
16. Liga pár páru v Slovenskej republike
17. Nezávislé kresťanské odbory Slovenska
18. OZ Centrum pre rodinu - Nitra
19. OZ S láskou k človeku
20. Pastor bonus o.z.

21. Plodar o.z.
22. Poradňa Alexis, n.o.
23. Pro-Life Action
24. Sakro o.z.
25. Slovenská spoločnosť pre spina bifida a/alebo hydrocefalus
26. Slovenské misijné hnutie
27. Spoločenstvo Kráľovnej rodiny
28. Spoločenstvo života
29. V.I.A.C. - Inštitút pre podporu a rozvoj mládeže
30. Záujmové združenie RODINA
31. Združenie kresťanských seniorov Slovenska
32. Združenie kresťanských spoločenstiev mládeže
33. Ženy ženám