

The Colorado Bishops Support Ballot Propositions 133, 134 & 135 And Encourage Coloradans to Vote to Protect Kids

18 September 2026

As Catholic bishops of Colorado, we encourage all Coloradans to vote **“yes”** for three propositions on the Colorado ballot to protect parental rights and the safety and dignity of children: **Proposition 133, Proposition 134 and Proposition 135.**

Proposition 133 Penalties for Human Trafficking of a Minor: “Children are Not for Sale Act”

Proposition 133 strengthens laws against the sex trafficking of children, including changing the crime from a class 2 felony to a class 1 felony with a mandatory sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole or release, with an exception for victims of sex trafficking who were coerced into participating in the trafficking act. Human trafficking violates the sanctity, dignity and fundamental rights of the human person. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Walk Free Foundation's "Global Estimate of Modern Slavery" (2016), 25 percent of all sex trafficking victims are children ages 17 or younger, which is about 10 million girls and boys worldwide. As of 2023, Colorado is ranked 10th in the nation for the highest sex trafficking reports.¹ Colorado is home to both Interstate 70 and Interstate 25, and children are often trafficked north and south along those routes. It is imperative that Coloradans strengthen laws that reject the modern slavery of sex trafficking of children.

Proposition 134 Male and Female Participation in School Sports: “Protect Girls’ Sports Act”

Proposition 134 requires all interscholastic and intermural athletic programs to be expressly designated based on biological sex as either for men, women or coeducational (co-ed). School and athletic organization policies that undermine the biological reality of a person’s body as male or female deny human dignity and are abusive to minors. Proposition 134 affirms the “unique and immutable biological differences” between men and women from birth and that those differences become more pronounced as children age and reach puberty. Policies that allow biological men to participate in women’s sports promote the unfair treatment of women and pose potentially dangerous and inappropriate situations for young women, including sharing bathrooms and locker rooms with biological men. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was a much-needed landmark to establish equal educational opportunities for women. Proposition 134 keeps in continuity with Title IX, is important for the equal dignity of men and women and addresses the unfair competition and potential safety concerns for minors when biological sex is disregarded.

¹ DJ Summers, “Human Trafficking in Colorado,” Common Sense Institute, 02 October 2024.
<https://www.commonsestituteus.org/colorado/research/crime-and-public-safety/human-trafficking-in-colorado-2023-new-record-year-for-trafficking-crimes>.

Proposition 135 Prohibit Certain Surgeries on Minors: “Protect Kids from Irreversible Sex-Rejecting Surgeries Act”

Proposition 135 recognizes that minors lack the maturity to make “permanent, life-altering medical decisions” and that medical interventions and surgery intended to alter a child’s biological sex often result in severe, irreversible consequences and even sterility.² Proposition 135 also prohibits medical providers from knowingly performing, prescribing or administering a medical intervention or surgery on a minor with the intent to alter their biological sex and prohibits state funding from being used for such medical interventions or surgeries. According to the *Declaration of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith “Dignitas Infinita” on Human Dignity* (2024), “any sex-change intervention, as a rule, risks threatening the unique dignity the person has received from the moment of conception.”³ The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* recognizes that “the human body shares in the dignity of ‘the image of God’” (CCC 364), including the body’s unique biological sex. The fundamental order of the human person is the unity of body and soul and attempts to alter biological sex are contrary to God’s divine plan for that person. This is why the Church emphasizes the need to respect the natural order of the human person, especially of children whose physical and mental well-being will be seriously harmed by permanent and life-altering medical interventions and surgeries. Furthermore, according to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in its “Doctrinal Note on the Moral Limits to Technological Manipulation of the Human Body” (March 2023), gender reassignment interventions are not licit and violate the Ethical and Religious Directives (ERD) for Catholic Health Care Services.⁴ *Currently, 25 hospitals in Colorado perform sex-alteration surgeries on children and 64 prescribe hormone therapy on children for so-called “gender affirming care,” according to data provided by Do No Harm organization of physicians* (www.donoharmmedicine.org).

These propositions must be enacted to protect Colorado families and children, especially as extreme laws violating parental rights continue to be advanced in our state despite public outcry.

In 2025, over 700 Coloradans went to the state capitol to oppose HB25-1312 [Legal Protections for Transgender Individuals](#). They opposed the bill because it would have stripped parents of their custody rights if the parents disagreed with their child’s professed gender ideology. Committee leadership limited testimony, effectively silencing more than half of the attendees who came to voice their serious concerns about the bill. Because of the public outcry and media attention, the parental custody portion of the bill was removed for the remainder of the general legislative session.

In 2026, Colorado legislators introduced yet another bill removing minor children from their parental custody if the parents disagreed with their child’s professed gender ideology. This time, the parental custody provision was hidden in a domestic violence bill, HB26-1309 [Abuse in Cases of Separation](#). The public outcry did not happen because the public was unaware of the extent of the bill, which seemed simply to promote good policy assisting victims of abuse. However, HB 1309 went far beyond that scope into gender ideology and parenting decisions. For instance, in addition

² The Mayo clinic found that male adolescents and teenagers placed on puberty blockers will have significant testicular atrophy leading to loss of fertility (Murugesh V, Ritting M, Salem S, Aalam SMM, Garcia J, Chattha AJ, et al. Puberty Blocker and Aging Impact on Testicular Cell States and Function. 2024). A National Institute of Health study failed to show benefit from puberty blockers for 95 children after a two-year follow-up (Dr. Joanna Olson-Kennedy). Surgical intervention is completely irreversible, which is even more significant for children whose healthy body parts are mutilated, leaving them sterile for life.

³ Declaration of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith “Dignitas Infinita” on Human Dignity, 04 August 2024, <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2024/04/08/240408c.html>.

⁴ According to the USCCB’s “Doctrinal Note on the Moral Limits to Technological Manipulation of the Human Body” (March 2023) for the Ethical and Religious Directives (ERD) of Catholic Health Care Services, “Catholic health care services must not perform interventions, whether surgical or chemical, that aim to transform the sexual characteristics of a human body into those of the opposite sex or take part in the development of such procedures.”

to removing parental custody due to disagreements on their child's professed gender ideology, HB26-1309 prohibits parents from stopping their children from hanging out with bad influences, monitoring their child's bank account to ensure good financial habits, using "find my phone" to ensure they know where their child is located to ensure safety, or even using "screen time" app to protect their child from negative internet exposure. Had Coloradans known the full extent of HB26-1309, they would have opposed it with the same fervor as HB25-1312.

All Coloradans should be concerned whenever government policy is to remove children from their families, not for abuse or neglect, but because parents and children disagree about deeply personal beliefs and everyday life decisions where parents have an obligation to protect and guide their children. The 2026 ballot propositions, Proposition 133, Proposition 134 and Proposition 135, are citizen-led initiatives that will empower Coloradans to secure their parental rights, protect their children and defend their First Amendment rights of conscience and expression.

As Catholic bishops of Colorado, we ask all Coloradans to vote to protect parental rights and the safety and dignity of children, and we implore the Catholic faithful to act in accordance with Church teaching in support of these three ballot propositions.

If you are registered to vote in Colorado, please vote for Prop. 133, Prop. 134 and Prop. 135. If you are not yet registered to vote, you may sign up here: www.coloradosos.gov/voter.

In addition, we invite you to form your conscience in preparation for your vote for your elected representatives by consulting our voter guide and candidate survey. You may find both here: www.cocatholic.org/2026-voter-guide.

As Catholics, it is our duty to shape the moral character of our community, state and country through participating in the political process, including voting with a conscience formed by Catholic Social Teaching. May we, as a community of faith, take this important stand for the dignity of the human person, the preservation of parental rights, the protection of children and the religious liberty of all by voting for Prop. 133, Prop. 134 and Prop. 135.

In Christ,

+ James R. Golka

Most Reverend James R. Golka
Archbishop of Denver

+ Stephen J. Berg

Most Reverend Stephen J. Berg
Bishop of Pueblo

+ Jorge H. Rodriguez

Most Reverend Jorge H. Rodriguez
Auxiliary Bishop of Denver

Very Rev. Kyle T. Ingels

Very Reverend Kyle T. Ingels
Diocesan Administrator of Colorado Springs



2026 COLORADO CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE



TOP CATHOLIC ISSUES ON THE BALLOT



Vote YES on Proposition 133 Penalties for Human Trafficking of a Minor: “Children are Not for Sale Act”

The Children Are Not for Sale Act increases penalties for individuals convicted of trafficking a child for sexual servitude and establishes life imprisonment without parole as the penalty for those convicted of purchasing or selling a child for sex. *Existing Colorado statute C.R.S. 18-3-504 protects victims of sex trafficking from this penalty if they are also convicted of trafficking.*



Vote YES on Proposition 134 Male and Female Participation in School Sports: “Protect Girls’ Sports Act”

The Protect Girls’ Sports Act will require all school athletic teams to be designated as male, female or co-ed according to biological sex.



Vote YES on Proposition 135 Prohibit Certain Surgeries on Minors: “Protect Kids from Irreversible Sex-Rejecting Surgeries Act”

The Protect Kids from Irreversible Sex-Rejecting Surgeries Act will prohibit healthcare providers from performing irreversible sex-rejecting surgeries on minors under the age of 18 for the explicit purpose of changing their biological sex. *Currently, 25 hospitals in Colorado perform sex-alteration surgeries on children and 64 prescribe hormone therapy on children for so-called “gender affirming care,” according to data provided by Do No Harm organization of physicians (www.donoharmmedicine.org).*



Colorado Catholic
Conference

As faithful Catholics, it is our duty to shape the moral character of our community, state and country through voting. Our faith maintains a hierarchy of values when voting on candidates and issues. The listed values are supported by the Colorado bishops. Each value is important; however, some are more foundational and therefore require more priority. It is the duty of each person's conscience to adhere to objective truth, which is reflected in the below values to guide your vote.

Hierarchy of Values to Guide Voting as a Catholic:

- 1 Sanctity of Life:** Human life must be protected at all stages from conception until natural death.
- 2 Marriage and Family:** Marriage is the union of a man and a woman who, together as husband and wife, may become father and mother to any children they bring into the world.
- 3 Religious Liberty:** Religious liberty is rooted in the dignity of the human person, including freedom of conscience and expression, and is central to the U.S. Constitution.
- 4 Economic Justice, Poverty, & Welfare:** Economic decisions should respect human dignity and reflect a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, providing safety nets and opportunities for upward mobility.
- 5 Healthcare:** Healthcare should be patient-centered, respect human dignity, protect life, promote the principle of subsidiarity, be affordable and assure conscience rights.
- 6 Immigration & Promoting Foreign Peace:** Immigration policy should meet immigrants' basic human needs, including the ability to work, and encourage pathways to citizenship. Promoting peace is essential in international relations.
- 7 Education:** Parents are the primary educators of their children; therefore, education policy should empower parents with education decision-making authority to choose the best learning options for their children.
- 8 Restorative Justice:** Criminal justice reform should focus on preventing crime and caring for survivors of crime, while also offering those who commit a crime an opportunity to rehabilitate and effectively return to society.
- 9 Energy & Environment:** Care for the environment and responsible use of energy resources come from our duty to steward creation and provide for future generations.
- 10 Technology:** Technology must respect human dignity, and protect children and the common good.

We prepared a legislative candidate survey for the Catholic Church in Colorado. Responses from candidates can be found using the QR code or visiting

[**cocatholic.org/resources/voter-guide**](https://cocatholic.org/resources/voter-guide)



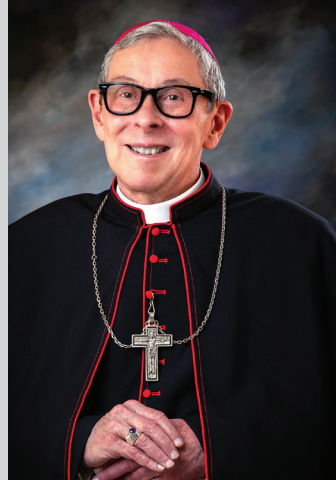


“Responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to ‘love our neighbor as ourselves.’”

Archbishop James R. Golka
Archdiocese of Denver

“Through our faith in Jesus Christ, we Catholics are called to prayerfully participate in political life, fulfilling our duty to form the moral character of our society for the common good of all.”

Bishop Stephen J. Berg
Diocese of Pueblo



“The government has the moral function to secure justice and peace in society. Citizens, especially prayerful Catholics, are required to participate in the political process with well-formed consciences.”

Bishop Jorge H. Rodríguez
Auxiliary Bishop of Archdiocese

“The Church encourages Catholic faithful to understand politics in its highest form as charity, oriented to the common good of our neighbors – not partisan division, but unity.”

Very Rev. Kyle T. Ingels
Diocesan Administrator, Diocese of Colorado Springs





PROTECT OUR CHILDREN



Protect them from exploitation
and trafficking

**VOTE YES on 133 Children are
Not for Sale Act**



Protect their dignity and
safety in sports

**VOTE YES on 134 Protect
Girls' Sports Act**



Protect them from permanent and
life-altering sex-change surgeries

**VOTE YES on 135 Protect Kids from Irreversible
Sex-Rejecting Surgeries Act**



**COLORADO
CATHOLIC
Action**



For more info. or to support:
COCatholicAction.org