HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE HOLY SEE, THE SUPREME PONTIFF, AND THE BISHOPS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO EXPLORE THE WIDESPREAD ADOPTION OF VIRI PROBATI, OR THE ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF CERTAIN QUALIFIED MARRIED MEN.

WHEREAS, the Catholic Church's policy of clerical celibacy, or the discipline by which only unmarried men are ordained to the priesthood, was adopted about one thousand years ago during the Middle Ages; and

WHEREAS, clerical celibacy is a policy rooted in tradition, not Catholic dogma; and

 WHEREAS, in recent decades, the pernicious problem of sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, particularly the sexual abuse of children by Catholic clergy, has become a matter of worldwide public attention and concern, resulting in defrockings, resignations, and criminal convictions of numerous Catholic clergy members; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy is overwhelming, and both Pope John Paul II in 2001 and Pope Francis in 2018 acknowledged the shame of the church's collective history involving sexual abuse and the mishandling of related matters by church authorities; and

WHEREAS, all children, including those in the care of clergy members, have a right to safety and freedom from physical, mental, emotional, and sexual abuse; and

WHEREAS, the common element of the improprieties and crimes perpetrated by numerous Catholic clergy members worldwide is that their wrongdoings were sexual in nature; and

WHEREAS, for the safety of church members and the preservation of the Catholic faith, it is in the best interest of the Catholic Church to examine the root cause of many of these issues and take concrete action to resolve the issue of sexual abuse and misconduct by Catholic clergy; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature urges the Holy See, the Supreme Pontiff, and the Bishops of the Catholic Church to explore the widespread adoption of viri probati, or the ordination of certain qualified married men; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urges and supports the Vatican's efforts to continue to engage in meaningful processes to resolve issues of sexual abuse, establish procedures to stop any future occurrences, and establish and fully support a pathway for victims to heal and maintain their faith in the Catholic Church; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Supreme Pontiff, United States Ambassador to the Holy See, Archbishop of Boston and President of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, Dean of the School of Canon Law at the Catholic University of America, and Bishop of Honolulu.

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