



**Diocese of Worcester**  
**Office of the Bishop**  
49 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

Dear Monsignor/Father,

In the coming days you may be approached by supporters of statewide ballot initiatives for the purpose of collecting signatures on church property. Signature gathering is one of the first steps to qualify for an official question to be placed on the ballot the following November.

As a reminder, at the direction of the four Ordinaries of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Catholic Conference (MCC) issued a signature drive policy in September 2019. The Ordinaries have approved the same policy for 2021 and is attached for your review.

For your information, this year there are two specific signature drives that are noteworthy:

The first is an INITIATIVE PETITION FOR A LAW TO PRESERVE THE LIVES OF CHILDREN BORN ALIVE. I strongly **encourage** you to allow the gathering of signatures for this petition as it is a pro-life petition seeking to protect babies born alive and is clearly in accordance with the moral teachings of the Church.

The second is an INITIATIVE PETITION FOR A LAW TO REQUIRE VOTER IDENTIFICATION IN MASSACHUSETTS. It is not the policy of the Diocese of Worcester or the MCC to support this petition, and I strongly urge you to refrain from allowing signature gathering on church property. This petition ignores the recognition of the effects of past unjust discrimination against the minority and immigrant communities and may prevent and discourage certain eligible individuals from exercising their right to vote. Furthermore, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has urged leaders at the federal level to consider the effects of unjust past discrimination in enactment of any laws related to voting rights.

If you have any questions, please contact James F. Driscoll, Executive Director, Massachusetts Catholic Conference at [jdriscoll@macatholic.org](mailto:jdriscoll@macatholic.org) or 617-746-5630.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus  
Bishop of Worcester