

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, December 4, 2003

Contact: Dave Maluchnik
517-372-9310

K-12 Education Funding Proposal Criticized by MCC

LANSING – Recently released budget plans slashing vital funding for the most vulnerable members of our society are being criticized today by the Michigan Catholic Conference.

“Proposals aimed at allocating desperately needed funds towards a K-12 budget that already eats up an extraordinarily large portion of the state budget are unjust and inequitable,” said Paul A. Long, MCC Vice-President for Public Policy. “Virtually every area of the state budget has been mentioned for significant cuts except the school aid fund. While it seems wise politically that education must remain a top priority, it is doing irreparable harm to the common good.”

Proposals that have been presented to the public call for damaging cuts to the Department of Community Health (DCH) and the Family Independence Agency (FIA), two state departments that are most responsible for caring for our most vulnerable citizens. Those proposals have suggested cutting DCH programs by \$22 million and some \$2.6 million from FIA.

“Education is obviously important for our children, but the level at which Michigan appropriates dollars toward the K-12 budget does not do justice to, for example, private foster care providers whom the state has brushed off year after year,” said Long. “There must be a just and fair distribution of funds so that those who desperately need state assistance are not left in the cold, especially at this time of year.”

“While pausing the rollback of the state income tax is also highly political, one must ask if saving a few extra cents a day is worth sacrificing assistance to those in our society for whom we are morally responsible,” Long concluded.

The Michigan Catholic Conference is the public policy voice for the Catholic Church in this state.