

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, December 10, 2003

Contact: Paul Long 517.648.1076 or
Dave Maluchnik 517.242.9623

MCC Praises Passage of Executive Order

Responsibilities to State's Most Vulnerable Citizens Addressed

LANSING – Over the past two weeks the Michigan Catholic Conference has advocated for a moral state budget, and today the Executive Order that was passed by the Senate and House Appropriation Committees temporarily alleviates budget-cutting concerns that would have damaged critical programs and services.

“The Executive Order that passed today takes the morally responsible steps toward protecting our state’s most vulnerable citizens,” said Paul A. Long, Vice-President for Public Policy. “It is now our sincere hope that this sense of moral responsibility continues to resonate until the budget is finalized.”

The Michigan Catholic Conference has been outspoken regarding the revenue deficit in an effort to ensure that Michigan’s budget is not balanced on the backs of the state’s most vulnerable and needy citizens. The state’s Medicaid program, which has been the source of over \$500 million in cuts over the past five years, and various programs within the Department of Community Health and the Family Independence Agency, were of particular concern.

“While legislative leaders, particularly Senate Majority Leader Sikkema, and the executive office took the appropriate measures toward alleviating the budget deficit, the House of Representatives must now act accordingly to finalize a fair, just and morally responsible budget,” said Long.

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

-- 30 --