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North Dakota abortion bill passes

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North Dakota abortion bill passes

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The North Dakota Legislature voted Monday to ban abortion in the state if courts rule that such a move would be constitutional.

Under the bill, the only abortions allowed would be those to protect the life of the mother or in cases of rape and incest.

Christopher Dodson, executive director of the North Dakota Catholic Conference, called the bill "an important step."

"It furthers the culture of life so that we don't turn our back on unborn children or the women who carry them," he said.

Sen. Tracy Potter, D-Bismarck, called it "terribly embarrassing."

"I believe this makes it look like North Dakota doesn't respect women's rights," he said.

The decision comes less than a week after a landmark Supreme Court decision upholding a ban on partial birth abortion. Advocates on both sides of the abortion issues agreed that this was a sign that the Court is becoming more anti-abortion, and thus more likely to overturn the 1973 Roe v. Wade case that requires it to be legal.

North Dakota is the second state, behind Mississippi, to pass such a law.

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