



Testimony
Senate Health and Long Term Care Committee
Senate Joint Memorial 8033
February 1, 2006

Good Afternoon Senator Keiser and members of the Committee. My name is Matt Muckler and I am the Legislative Director for the Washington State Catholic Conference, which represents the Catholic bishops of the State of Washington on issues of public policy.

I am here today to oppose Senate Joint Memorial 8033. While we support the goals of UNFPA to reduce poverty, to ensure live births and to treat girls and women with respect and dignity, we oppose allocating funds when they are used to violate these very goals.

In congressional testimony Chinese human rights advocates have provided compelling evidence that UNFPA supports and is even involved in the administration of an oppressive Chinese program of coercion. The program in China, administered by UNFPA and the Chinese Office of Family Planning, uses forced abortion and sterilization and the imposition of fines, destruction of homes and imprisonment of women and their family members for failure to comply with the program. Women in China spoke of being subjected to forced abortions and forced sterilizations.

Since 1985, Congress has forbidden the funding of any organization which, as determined by the President of the United States, "supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization." No one can plausibly deny that the Chinese population program uses these coercive means, or that the UNFPA supports and even helps manage the Chinese program. It is tragic that one of the UN's own agencies has failed to appreciate that such policies assault the dignity of women as well as the lives of vulnerable unborn children.

Thank you for your consideration.