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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **A Statement of the Roman Catholic Bishops of Massachusetts on Earned Sick Time (Question 4)**

We, the bishops of the four Catholic Dioceses in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts urge citizens to vote “Yes” on Ballot Question 4 on November 4<sup>th</sup>. This new law would make earned sick time a requirement for Massachusetts employers.

In 2013, Pope Francis stated in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* that “it is through free, creative, participatory and mutually supportive labor that human beings express and enhance the dignity of their lives.” The social teaching of the Catholic Church has long been clear on the essential nature of work for the maintenance of the dignity of the human person. It is this teaching that informs our opinion and endorsement of Question 4 today. In March of this year we endorsed the right of the worker to a fair wage, and we wish to continue to reaffirm Catholic teaching regarding the importance of work, family, and the fundamental dignity of all persons.

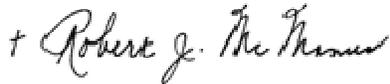
Today, those without sick time are oftentimes forced to choose between going to work sick or losing a day’s pay, in many cases threatening the loss of their job. Tragically, many are forced to send a sick child to school to save their income or their job. These are the same individuals who earn the least amount and struggle to provide the basic needs for themselves and their families. By endorsing a “yes” vote on Question 4, workers in Massachusetts would be able to earn up to 40 hours of earned sick time per year to take care of their own health or the health of a family member. Employers with 11 or more employees would be required to provide paid sick leave to their employees. Employers with less than 11 employees would be required to provide unpaid sick leave.

If Question 4 passes, Massachusetts will follow California and Connecticut as states that legally require earned sick time. We believe that requiring earned sick time contributes to the dignity of every worker. Low-wage workers, those that are most vulnerable, deserve the security of knowing that their work will result in providing for their means and the means of their families without the fear of job loss. This proposal is reasonable and fair. It will allow workers to stay home when they or their family members are

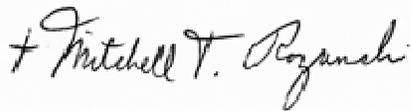
ill, keeping our workers, families, and workplaces healthy. We urge the citizens of Massachusetts to vote “Yes” on Ballot Question 4.



His Eminence Seán P. Cardinal O’Malley, OFM, Cap.  
Archbishop of Boston



Most Reverend Robert J. McManus  
Bishop of Worcester



Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski  
Bishop of Springfield



Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, SDV  
Bishop of Fall River