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Gumbleton weighs in on Michigan right-to-work law

by NCR Staff

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A few weeks ago, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops voted down a proposed statement on the economy, "The Hope of the Gospel in Difficult Economic Times." The statement was lambasted for including only one mention of unions. "It's almost like it was an afterthought," Archbishop Anthony Fiorenza said. He added that the rights to organize and bargain collectively were "at the heart of our social teaching."

Today, in Michigan, those rights are under attack. Legislators in the House and Senate have passed right-to-work legislation, which would undermine unions' ability to bargain collectively.

Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, retired auxiliary bishop from the Archdiocese of Detroit and an *NCR* contributor, weighed in on the legislation in an opinion piece in Monday's *Lansing State Journal*, "Woe unto those who make unjust laws."

Gumbleton writes: "As Catholics, we believe that if the dignity of work is to remain protected, then the basic rights of workers must be protected -- fair wages, freedom from discrimination and the right to organize and join unions. We believe in justice. We believe in the common good ... Right-to-work laws go against everything we believe."

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