

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**January 23, 2012**

**Seattle archbishop testifies against measure to redefine marriage**

**(OLYMPIA)** Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle urged opposition to SB 6239, which would alter the current legal definition of marriage, in testimony before the Senate Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections Committee [today](#).

Archbishop Sartain, president of the Washington State Catholic Conference, which represents the Catholic Bishops of Washington State on issues of public policy, asked members of the committee to recognize that “as the foundation of the family, marriage between a man and a woman is the basic unit of society, a personal relationship with public significance.”

“The natural structure of human sexuality orders the transmission of human life through man and woman,” the archbishop said. “Because only the union of a man and woman can generate new life, no other human relationship is its equivalent.”

The state has always recognized the broad social benefits derived from promoting strong families based on the marriage of a man and a woman, he said.

“Were the definition of marriage to change, there would be no special laws to support and recognize the irreplaceable contribution that these married couples make to society and to the common good by bringing to life the next generation,” Archbishop Sartain said.

The other members of the Washington State Catholic Conference are Bishop Blase J. Cupich, Diocese of Spokane; Bishop Joseph J. Tyson, Diocese of Yakima; and Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle.

Their joint statement, “Marriage and the Common Good,” may be found by visiting [www.thewsc.org](http://www.thewsc.org).

-----For more information, contact: Greg Magnoni 206-382-4862 (w) or 425-829-5520 (m)-----