

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/sweeping-vote-in-utah-labels-porn-dangerous-to-public-health-92952/>

Sweeping vote in Utah labels porn dangerous to public health

By [Kevin J. Jones](#) Salt Lake City, Utah, Mar 15, 2016

- Utah's state legislature recently passed a resolution warning about the harm pornography does to individuals, families and society. The resolution says that the state legislature “recognizes that pornography is a public health hazard leading to a broad spectrum of individual and public health impacts and societal harms.”

Susan Dennin, a spokesperson for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City, said the move “affirms our belief in the inviolable dignity of the human person revealed fully in Christ and the gift of human sexuality and marriage in God’s plan.” She told CNA March 14 that the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops had discussed this topic in their November 2015 document [“Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography.”](#)

The Utah House of Representatives passed the resolution March 11 near the close of its legislative session. The Utah Senate had approved the bill in February by a unanimous vote of 24-0. The resolution charges that pornography perpetuates “a sexually toxic environment” and contributes to the “hyper-sexualization” of young children and teens. It is critical towards technological advances that have made it easier for young children to access pornography. It also cites pornography’s potential impact on brain development and functioning, its potential to harm users’ ability to form intimate relationships, and its potential to lead to “problematic or harmful sexual behaviors and addiction.” The resolution charged that pornography “treats women and children as objects.”

The legislature says that pornography has a detrimental effect on the family due to a link with “lessening desire in young men to marry, dissatisfaction in marriage, and infidelity.” In response to these problems, the resolution advocates unspecified “education, prevention, research, and policy change.” State Sen. Todd Weiler, a sponsor of the resolution, said, “For us to pretend that this has no impact on our values and on our society and culture and the brain development of our adolescents is very naïve,” he said.

He said the response to pornography should model itself on efforts to control access to and promotion of tobacco after evidence showed it was harmful. “My goal in passing this resolution is to start a national movement to do the same thing with pornography – not to ban it, but to protect our children from it,” he said.

Utah is a predominantly Mormon state. The resolution won praise from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, a leader in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “Society must see this evil like the epidemic it is,” he said, according to KSL-TV.