

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Week of March 22, 2021

State Issues	
End of Life Option Act	SB 380 (Eggman), the bill that would make changes to the End of Life Option Act (EOLOA) was heard in Senate Health Committee on Wednesday, and passed out on an 8-1 party-line vote, with two members not voting. The bill now moves to the Senate Judiciary Committee. This bill eliminates the January 1, 2026 sunset (extends the Act indefinitely), eliminates many of the “safe guards,” and begins to weaken conscience protections for providers and health facilities. While not provided at the hearing, the Senate Health Committee has recommended several amendments to SB 380 – these amendments are not yet in print. Among other things, these proposed amendments include: reducing the 15-day waiting period to 48 hours; removes the scope of practice expansion of licensed clinical social workers and professional counselors in lieu of a psychiatrist as the consulting mental health specialist; and, removes the requirement that a non-participating physician must refer a patient to a participating health provider. The proposed amendments do not address all of the provisions that intend to roll back the conscience protections for health care facilities. The Alliance is an active partner in the “No on SB 380” coalition.
UC Partnerships with Catholic Health Care	<p>As we reported last week, SB 379 (Weiner): UC Health contracts with health facilities, moved out of Senate Education Committee on a partisan 5-2 vote and was scheduled to be heard in Senate Health Committee on April 7. This bill would preclude the UC Health System from contracting with any health care provider that follows “non-clinical policy-based restrictions on care.” We have learned that Senator Dr. Richard Pan, chair of Senate Health, may postpone the hearing to a later date in order to hear from key stakeholders.</p> <p>On a related note, the Alliance was able to respond to an opinion article in the San Francisco Examiner that seriously misrepresented both the value of the partnerships between UC and Catholic health and mischaracterized the fundamental tenets of Catholic health care. The Alliance’s response, “<i>UC, Catholic health care partnership is saving lives</i>” can be found at: https://www.sfexaminer.com/opinion/uc-catholic-health-care-partnership-is-saving-lives/</p>
Legislative Summary and Status Report	Attached is the Alliance Legislative Summary and Status Report on bills of interest to the Catholic health care ministry.
Assemblymember Bonta Appointed as Attorney General	On Wednesday Governor Newsom appointed Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Alameda) as California attorney general, to replace Xavier Becerra who recently was confirmed as President Biden’s Health and Human Services Secretary. Bonta was the first Filipino American elected to the state Legislature in 2012. His appointment is subject to confirmation by the state Senate and Assembly within 90 days. Assemblymember Bonta currently serves as a member of the Senate Health Committee.
Legislative Recess	The Legislative Spring Recess begins today, and they will reconvene on Monday, April 5.

(more)

COVID-19 Information and Resources

Love Your Neighbor and Get Vaccinated

Today (March 26), the California Catholic Conference and Markkula Center for Applied Ethics and Santa Clara University held a webinar – *“Love Your Neighbor and Get Vaccinated: Science, Ethics and the COVID-19 Vaccines”* – to help diocesan and parish staff to understand the moral, ethical, and medical aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to offer answers to common concerns and questions. Presenters offered explanations of the official Catholic teaching on the COVID-19 vaccinations, as well as their medical efficacy. And in a prepared video statement, Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego spoke to the importance of vaccination, emphasizing Pope Francis' message that receiving a vaccination demonstrates love for your neighbor (<https://youtu.be/RoYbYY2YU4s>). The presentations were followed by an excellent question and answer session. A recording of the full webinar will be available in the coming days and we will include the link in the next week's Update.

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