

# WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

# CAPITOL UPDATE

January 19, 2009

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Please note the *Capitol Update* will now be distributed using the Wisconsin Catholic Conference's e-advocacy service.

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## ***Capitol Update Resumes Publication***

Now that the Legislature has re-opened, the WCC resumes regular publication of its *Capitol Update*. The *Update* will be sent approximately every two weeks to subscribers. Sign up for this free news service online at [http://capwiz.com/wisconsin\\_nasccd/state/main/?state=WI](http://capwiz.com/wisconsin_nasccd/state/main/?state=WI). Click on the red "E-Advocacy" link to register to receive the *Update* and other electronic information.

## ***New Legislative Session Begins***

The Legislature last week opened its 2009-10 Session with a swearing-in ceremony. Democrats control the Senate 18-15 and the Assembly 52-46, with one Independent. Little activity is expected until Governor Doyle presents his biennial budget in early February. The first floor period, when one or both houses are in session to vote on legislation, will be February 3-10.

## ***WCC Protests Abortion Plan at Madison Surgery Center***

The WCC sent a [letter](#) last week to the presidents of the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics, the University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation, and Meriter Hospital, strongly objecting to the hospitals' arrangement to begin performing second-trimester abortions at the Madison Surgery Center.

Since the proposal involves the state-funded UW Hospitals and Clinics, *Update* readers from around Wisconsin are urged to send letters of protest to the three presidents at the following addresses or fax numbers:

Ms. Donna Katen-Bahensky  
President and CEO

Jeffrey Grossman, M.D.  
President and CEO

James L. Woodward  
President and CEO

University of Wisconsin  
Hospitals and Clinics  
600 Highland Ave.  
Madison, WI 53792-8350  
Fax: (608) 263-9830

University of Wisconsin  
Medical Foundation  
600 Highland Ave.  
Madison, WI 53792-8310  
Fax: (608) 265-1642

Meriter Hospital  
202 S. Park Street  
Madison, WI 53715  
Fax: (608) 417-6357

## **USCCB Launches FOCA Postcard Campaign**

The U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops will be launching a postcard campaign in late January and early February to protest any attempt to pass into law the “Freedom of Choice Act” (FOCA). If FOCA is signed into law, it would not merely codify *Roe v. Wade*, it would make abortion a “fundamental right.” Moreover, it would negate all reasonable limits that states have put in place since 1973. Each diocese will provide parishes with the postcards.

In a related matter, President-elect Obama is said to be reviewing three federal pro-life policies, with a view to reversing them. Readers are asked to write to the President-elect, urging that he not change: 1) the Mexico City Policy; 2) the federal ban on embryonic stem cell research; and 3) the new conscience protections for health care providers issued in December by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For additional information on FOCA and these three federal policies, please see our January issue of the [Capitol Report](#).

## **Registration Begins for *Catholics at the Capitol***

Registration forms are now available for *Catholics at the Capitol* to be held on Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison.

The theme for this year’s event is “Hope in Action” and will feature breakout sessions on Catholic social teaching, alternatives to abortion, effective advocacy, socially conscious parishes, medical ethics, conscience laws, healthcare reform, assisting fragile families, predatory lending, prisoner recidivism, St. Vincent de Paul programs, assisting the unemployed, immigration, and environmental justice.

The day will conclude with a plenary session on religion and the public square, featuring a panel discussion between two bishops and two politicians.

The keynote speaker will be the Most Reverend Bishop Paul Swain of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Registration is \$33/person and includes a continental breakfast and lunch. High school and university students can register for \$10. The registration deadline is March 12. [Registration form](#).

## **Minimum Wage Bill Introduced**

Sen. Decker (D-Weston) has reintroduced a bill to increase the minimum wage to \$7.60 and to provide for inflation indexing. The WCC supported the bill last session and will do so again. A public hearing is scheduled for Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup>. See below for time and location.

## **Governor Doyle Proclaims Catholic Schools Week**

Governor Doyle has proclaimed the week of January 25–January 31, 2009, as Catholic Schools Week in Wisconsin. The theme for this year’s national observance is “Catholic Schools Celebrate Service.”

## **Upcoming Hearings of Interest**

(N.B. Only bills of interest are flagged. In most cases, committees will be considering other bills as well.)

### **Senate Labor, Elections and Urban Affairs**

**10am, Thu., Jan. 29, 411 S.**

[SB-1](#). (Decker) State minimum wage.

## **New Bills of Interest**

[SB-1](#). **Minimum Wage** (Decker) Increases the minimum wage to \$7.60 and provides for inflation indexing.

## **Web Sites of Interest**

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/waml>

- Who are my legislators

[Directory of Senate Members](#)

[Directory of Assembly Members](#)

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/leginfo.html>

- 2009-10 Session Schedule
- Weekly Schedule of Committee Activities
- Senate and Assembly Daily Floor Calendar

*Capitol Update* is a periodic e-mail on legislative issues from the Wisconsin Catholic Conference.

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