

Capitol Update

May 13, 2011

Contents Include:

1. WCC Supports Abortion Opt-Out in State Health Care Exchange
2. WCC Opposes Passage of Conceal and Carry of Weapons
3. U.S. Bishops Welcome House Passage of “No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act”
4. New Bills of Interest

WCC Supports Abortion Opt-Out in State Health Care Exchange

The WCC supports legislation introduced this week to opt Wisconsin out of including abortion services in any future state health benefit exchange. The 2010 federal health care reform act (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, or PPACA) mandates that states establish health care exchanges. Although health insurance plans offering abortion coverage are allowed to participate in these exchanges and receive federal subsidies, PPACA also gives states the right to affirmatively opt-out of offering these plans. [Senate Bill 92](#) (Sen. Rich Zipperer, R-Pewaukee) prohibits a qualified health plan offered through any exchange operating in Wisconsin from covering any abortion that is ineligible for federal or state funding. The bill awaits a public hearing.

WCC Opposes Passage of Conceal and Carry of Weapons

The WCC this week submitted written [testimony](#) in opposition to [Assembly Bill 126](#) (Rep. Jeffrey Mursau, R-Crivitz), which would permit the carrying of concealed weapons (CCW) in public. The WCC asked that if advanced, the bill include exemptions for buildings used for religious purposes, hospitals, child care facilities, nursing homes, treatment facilities, and domestic violence service sites. It also requested that the bill require firearms training for CCW holders. Similar exemptions were included in the final bills passed by the Legislature in 2003 and 2005 and subsequently vetoed by then-Governor Doyle. The WCC holds a similar position on a companion bill, [Senate Bill 90](#) (Sen. Pam Galloway, R-Wausau), and on a separate bill, [Senate Bill 93](#) (Sen. Pam Galloway, R-Wausau), which would not require a permit for CCW holders. Wisconsin and Illinois are the only states that still prohibit CCW, but enactment of some type of legislation permitting concealed weapons seems likely in Wisconsin this session.

U.S. Bishops Welcome House Passage of “No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act”

The Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) welcomed the recent passage of the “No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act” (H.R. 3) by the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill codifies a permanent, government-wide policy against taxpayer subsidies for abortion and abortion coverage, improves federal conscience protection for health care providers and entities, and closes various loopholes that give tax-preferred status to abortion. Co-sponsored by Representatives Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Dan Lipinski (D-IL), the bill passed with bipartisan support by a vote of 251-175 .

USCCB testimony supporting H.R. 3 is available at www.usccb.org/prolife/HR3-testimony-2011-02-08.pdf.

New Bills of Interest

SJR-28. Pregnancy Month (Kapanke) Honors pregnancy care centers; proclaims October as Pregnancy Care Month.

SB-86. Felons – Hiring (Darling) Permits an educational agency to refuse to employ or to terminate from employment an unpardoned felon. To Labor, Public Safety and Urban Affairs.

SB-90. Carry Concealed – Permit (Galloway) Authorizes carrying concealed weapons with a permit. To Judiciary.

SB-92. Abortions (Zipperer) Prohibits coverage of abortions through health plans sold through exchanges. To Public Health, Human Services and Revenue.

SB-93. Carry Concealed – Constitutional Carry (Galloway) Allows carrying concealed weapons. To Judiciary.

AJR-34. Pregnancy Month (Jacque) Honors pregnancy care centers; proclaims October as Pregnancy Care Month.

AB-122. Unpardoned Felons (Thiesfeldt) Permits an educational agency to refuse to employ or to terminate from employment an unpardoned felon. To Education.

AB-126. Carry Concealed – Permit (Mursau) Authorizes carry concealed with a permit. To Criminal Justice.

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>

- 2011-12 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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