

## WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

# Capitol Update

April 15, 2011

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### **Hundreds Attend *Catholics at the Capitol***

Catholics from around the state gathered at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison on April 5, 2011, for the Wisconsin Catholic Conference's 7<sup>th</sup> biennial advocacy day. The theme of "Living Faith in the Public Square" was exemplified in the day's events starting with a morning prayer service with presider, Bishop Robert Morlino of Madison, and a keynote address offered by Archbishop Jerome ListECKI of Milwaukee. A question-and-answer panel of bishops and Catholic lay leaders also offered participants the opportunity to reflect upon how Catholics can elevate public policy dialogue by following the very public example of Christ.

Participants attended informational workshops, discussed how to better advocate for policy reform from a Catholic perspective, and met with legislators and staff to discuss issues of concern. Materials from the day's events, such as WCC issue briefs, Archbishop ListECKI's keynote address, and WCC 2011 Public Policy Positions and legislative directory are available on the [WCC's website](#). Special thanks to the bishops, sponsors, speakers, volunteers, staff, and participants who made this day a success.

The next *Catholics at the Capitol* will be held in the spring of 2013.

### **U.S. Bishops to Congress: *No to Planned Parenthood, Yes to Protection of Poor and Conscience Rights***

Noting that "Planned Parenthood Federation of America is by far the largest provider and promoter of abortions nationwide, performing about a third of all abortions (332,278 abortions in Fiscal Year 2008-9)," Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Pro-Life Activities, urged U.S. House Representatives on April 13 to vote in favor

of H. Con. Res. 36, which would ban federal funding for Planned Parenthood in the Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2011 (H.R. 1473).

In his letter, Cardinal DiNardo urged Congress to redirect the funds that currently go to organizations that perform abortions to programs that help meet the “basic needs of the poor.”

For a copy of the Cardinal’s letter, see <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/DiNardo-HR1473.pdf>.

In a budget letter to the U.S. House of Representatives also issued on April 13, the two chairmen of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development and the Committee on International Justice and Peace urged Congress to craft a federal budget that “reduces future deficits, protects poor and vulnerable people, advances the common good, and promotes human life and dignity.”

For a copy of the budget letter, see <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/2012-Budget-Letter-to-House-04-13-11.pdf>

On April 6, Cardinal DiNardo wrote to all members of the House urging them to support a bipartisan bill protecting conscience rights in health insurance. The Respect for Rights of Conscience Act of 2011 (HR 1179) “will help ensure that the new health care reform act is not misused to violate the religious freedom and rights of conscience of those who offer and purchase health insurance coverage in our nation,” Cardinal DiNardo wrote.

For a copy of the conscience letter, see <http://www.usccb.org/conscienceprotection/DiNardo-ltr-HR1179.pdf>

### **Upcoming Hearings of Interest**

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

#### **Assembly Education,**

**10 am, Tue, April 19, 417 North**

[AB-71](#). DPI (Kestell) Expands definition of “immoral conduct” under licensing provisions at DPI.

[AB-92](#). **Milwaukee Parental Choice Program** (Honadel) Eliminates the enrollment cap for the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program; extends the program to permit private schools located in Milwaukee County to participate.

[AB-94](#). **Milwaukee Parental Choice Program** (Marklein) Changes to the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program.

### **New Bills of Interest**

[SJR-21](#). **Health Insurance** (Leibham) Right of the people to contract privately for health care services and coverage; prohibits requiring a person to obtain or maintain health insurance coverage or to participate in any health care system or plan. (1<sup>st</sup> Consideration). To Insurance & Housing.

[SB-57](#). **Corrections** (Wanggaard) Eliminates positive adjustment time and risk reduction sentences, restores the parole commission, eliminates the ERRC, and returns the sentencing provisions, and most of the provisions relating to early release from confinement, to what existed in law prior to 2009 Wisconsin Act 28. To Labor, Public Safety, and Urban Affairs.

[AJR-21](#). **Fiscal Responsibility Fund** (Tranel) Creates the fiscal responsibility fund (1<sup>st</sup> Consideration). To Ways & Means.

[AJR-28](#). **Health Insurance** (Vos) Right of the people to contract privately for health care services and coverage; prohibits requiring a person to obtain or maintain health insurance coverage or to participate in any health care system or plan. (1<sup>st</sup> Consideration). To Insurance.

[AB-71](#). **DPI** (Kestell) Expands definition of “immoral conduct” under licensing provisions at DPI.

[AB-76](#). **Prisoners** (Radcliffe) Costs of prescription drugs and devices for prisoners. To Criminal Justice & Corrections.

[AB-77](#). **Prisoners** (Radcliffe) Prisoner meals. To Criminal Justice & Corrections.

[AB-92](#). **Milwaukee Parental Choice Program** (Honadel) Eliminates the enrollment cap for the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program; extends the program to permit private schools located in Milwaukee County to participate. To Education.

**AB-94. Milwaukee Parental Choice Program** (Marklein) Changes to the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. To Education.

**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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