

Legislative Session Update

This notice is also an official public policy announcement of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii.

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2007 Legislative Session HFF Off and Running

Whew, what a week at the capitol. Here's a recap.

Physician-assisted suicide. (PAS) Great News. After significant effort, HB 675 (titled death with dignity), which would legalize physician assisted suicide, has been re-referred to the House Health Committee and will not be fast tracked through the Judiciary Committee. The bill is less likely to pass out of the House Health Committee. We expect a public hearing next week so stay tuned. Click here to find out about [our efforts for re-referral](#) and to [learn more about the dangers of PAS](#). [Click here for a local media take on the subject](#).

Civil Unions. Despite local media stories on the subject ([click here for stories](#)), there appears little legislative interest (SO FAR) in delving into this controversial issue. We oppose efforts to provide all the rights and benefits of marriage to same-sex couples through civil unions as doing so amounts to same-sex marriage by another name. We do support improving Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law (which is not based on sex partner status) as a vehicle to provide additional benefits to all people in need. We'll keep you posted.

Divestment from the Sudan. There is a literal genocide occurring daily in the Darfur region of the Sudan, as declared by Congress and the President. HB 34 and HB 1117 would require the state employee retirement system (ERS) to divest securities from companies doing active business with the genocide-supporting government of Sudan. We strongly support this measure and pose this question: If genocide doesn't rise to the level of seriousness to trigger divestment, what would? [Click here to view our testimony](#).

Domestic Violence. Victims who are also survivors of domestic violence wouldn't be able to be discriminated against when trying to find a new place to live under HB 469. We support this measure and others designed to provide better community and law enforcement support for victims of domestic violence. [Click here to view our testimony](#).

Children's Health Care. We support the public-private pilot project, referred to as keiki care, (HB 1008) to provide health insurance coverage to Hawaii's uninsured children. Ensuring that our keiki receive access to necessary medical care is crucial and this program will end up saving money as children are diverted from receiving primary health care services in the most expensive setting: the emergency room. [Click here to view testimony](#).

On these and other issues of interest to you, we urge you to let your voice be heard. With charity and clarity, contact your legislators and express your opinions. [IF you don't know who your legislators are, click here to find out](#).

Aloha and have a great weekend with your family.

For the Family,
Kelly

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