

CATHOLIC HOSPITALS TARGETED BY CALIFORNIA BILL

California Assemblywoman Shelia James Kuehl has introduced legislation that would deny funds to Catholic hospitals that are collected through the sale of revenue bonds. The bill revokes the right to sell revenue bonds from any health facility that does not provide for the full range of reproductive services. In essence, it would penalize Catholic hospitals for being Catholic.

Catholic League president William Donohue outlined the league's strategy:

"The bill by Assemblywoman Kuehl is a mean-spirited retaliatory attack on Catholic hospitals. It comes in the wake of months of discussion among abortion advocates: they are exercised over the merger of secular and Catholic hospitals. This is the latest club they are using to beat Catholic hospitals into submission. Susan Fogel, legal director of the California Woman's Law Center, admitted as much when she said, 'This is only the first of its kind in the country, and not the last.'

"The First Amendment allows for separation of church and state. What Kuehl is trying to do is superimpose on Catholic hospitals a hostile secular vision of health care. If this bill passes it will surely be tested in the courts.

"The Catholic League is writing to every member of the California legislature expressing its grave concerns over this bill."