

REMOVAL OF FR. SERRA STATUE POSTPONED



Bill Donohue comments on the resolution to put on hold the removal of a statue of Fr. Junípero Serra from the U.S. Capitol:

The California state legislature recently announced that it will postpone a vote on the proposal to remove the statue of Fr. Serra from the U.S. Capitol. California State Senator Ricardo Lara is responsible for both authoring the proposal and requesting that the vote be postponed. Lara cited Pope Francis' upcoming visit as the reason for the postponement.

California Assemblyman William P. Brough and Sen. Pat Bates welcomed the good news. According to a joint statement released by Brough and Bates, "Debating such a bill just before the pope's visit would have conveyed a terrible message to him and millions of Catholics around the world, contradicting California's reputation as a tolerant and welcoming place for all people."

Now that the California legislature has agreed to a delay, perhaps they can take this opportunity to reconsider the proposal and drop the matter entirely. The Catholic League has contended that the opposition to Fr. Serra's statue rises out of misunderstandings of his work and legacy. It was to correct such misunderstandings that I published the booklet, *The Noble Legacy of Fr. Serra*; it was distributed to interested parties in California and beyond.

John Liston, executive director of Serra International, expressed his gratitude for my effort. "I think it went a long way in assisting the California legislature to suspend the

vote to remove the statue of Fr. Serra from Statuary Hall," he said.

The Catholic League applauds the California state legislature for postponing the vote to remove Fr. Serra's statue. It should now reconsider the entire issue.