



Orlando Diocesan Council of Catholic Women National Council of Catholic Women

Report of: Legislative Advocacy Committee
Meeting: CDCCW Board Meeting
Date: March 16, 2024
Presented by: Ann Fivie

Dear Fr. Bill, Madame President, and dear CCW sisters,

The 2024 Legislative Session has come to a close on Friday, March 8. Now is the time to write thank you notes to your legislators, thanking them for their service and for the work they did during this session to accomplish so much. The Legislature passed a \$117.46 billion state budget for 2024-2025 fiscal year that starts July 1. The budget will go to the Governor for his approval. The budget includes: Prison Funding – In addition to continued operations funding, the legislature added \$100 million in recurring funds to begin to tackle capital improvements at prisons; Health Care – This year, the legislature made historic investments in health care, over \$33 billion total to ensure Floridians have better access to high quality care in settings appropriate for their needs; Pregnancy Support Services – The Florida Pregnancy Care Network maintains its \$29.5 million in funding to name a few budget items.

Other FCCB supported Bills that passed include

HB 1549 / SB 7016 Access to Health Care

HB3 / SB1792 Protection of Minors from Pornography and Harms on Social Media

HB415 / SB 436 Pregnancy and Parenting Resource Website

HB 1403 / SB7058 School Choice

Other bills also passed that were of interest to FCCB but without formal position. More information about all of these bills is available on the FCCB website.

There is much to be thankful for, and much to continue praying for. Of course, the deadline for the decision from the Florida Supreme Court on the controversial abortion bill is April 7th. Please continue to pray that the Justices will keep that amendment from reaching the general ballot.

Your legislators will return to their home offices soon, if they have not already. Please make plans to visit them there. It is much easier to travel to their home offices than to Tallahassee, and probably much easier to get an appointment as well. Make a visit, get to know them and let them know you, continue to educate them about Council of Catholic Women and our stance on legislation from the viewpoint of our Catholic teachings. We all know that school gap or backslide happens over the summer in school aged children. Let's not allow our legislators to forget who we are or what Council of Catholic Women stands for.

Above all, remember, 2024 is a presidential election year. Please educate yourself about all of the candidates who will be on the ballot in November to make informed choices. Learn about any and all amendments that may be on the ballot and vote with informed Catholic Conscience.