



June 1, 2026

The Honorable Akilah Weber Pierson, Chair
Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Room 2100
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1876 (Addis) Healthcare coverage: nondiscrimination – Oppose

Dear Chair Weber and Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee,

The California Catholic Conference **OPPOSES AB 1876** (Addis), as introduced. This bill mirrors the federal HHS Rule 1557, prohibiting insurance plans from discriminating on the basis of sex and gender identity.

The mission of Catholic institutions is to strive to make Jesus' presence known. We champion healthcare that respects the life and dignity of each person and the integrity of the body as a gift, and no individual should be denied healthcare because of his or her sex. At the same time, we object to coverage of gender transition procedures that are medically ineffective or cause harm and violate professional and evidence-based judgments as to an appropriate course of treatment.

Research demonstrates “no advantage” of gender transition surgery in reduction of mental illness nor suicide attempts. In fact, a study of 107,000 patients published last year in the *Journal of Sexual Medicine* found those undergoing surgery were at significantly higher risk for depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and substance use disorders than those without surgery. Treatments altering sexual appearance may cause serious lifelong physical and emotional harm, in violation of basic bioethical principles.

It is contrary to established medical practice to destroy the healthy functioning of bodily systems, and unjust to force employers of conscience to pay for harm. Extending the love of Jesus to and affirming the dignity of gender-nonconforming people requires rejecting interventions that directly harm and provide no demonstrated advantage, and accompanying people with gender dysphoria throughout their journey. As we stated in our letter supporting AB 798 to ban tourism for female genital mutilation, no one can consent to human rights abuses that destroy the healthy functioning of reproductive or sexual organs and systems. Pope Francis called for pastoral care of all persons with gender dysphoria, encouraging each of us towards “accepting our bodies as God’s gift” with “an appreciation of our body as male or female.”

No insurer or plan sponsor should be required as a condition of participating in the market for health plans, to violate the very religious and moral convictions that prompt them to offer those benefits in the first place. Catholic employers forced to provide insurance coverage that finances the destruction of healthy organs and body systems would violate established human rights norms, and the Christian virtues of charity, integrity, and justice.

The current federal administration already struck down HHS Rule 1557. Passing this bill will place service providers in a paradox, either requiring that they follow state law to cover gender transition procedures and thus face federal challenges, or suffer financial losses from defense against lawsuits from violation of state law. This catch-22 may force more service providers to go out of business or shut down their services.

For these reasons, as the official public policy voice for the Catholic Church of California, we request that you vote “**NO**” on **AB 1876**. Should you have any questions regarding our position please contact Molly Sheahan, Associate Director for Healthy Families, at (916) 313-4000 or msheahan@cacatholic.org.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen Domingo
Executive Director
KD:MS:mjp