

Public Policy/Legislation Update, 14 October 2025

From the NYS Catholic Conference:

Medical Aid in Dying Bill A136 - The Governor has not taken any action on this bill. The Catholic Conference is urging her to veto it. Make your voice heard at <https://bit.ly/veto-pas> or go to nyscatholic.org and then "Action Center."

NYS Legislation:

Gov. Hochul signed legislation ensuring benefits to 9/11 first responders:

—Expands the criteria that define first responders who participated in World Trade Center rescue.

—Allows for electronic submission of a notice that a member of a retirement system participated in WTC Rescue.

—Defines a "first responder in communications" as an individual who is a public safety dispatcher, emergency responder, emergency operator, emergency complaint operator, and emergency services dispatcher who meets minimum requirements by local government.

Proposed Legislation: To allow National Guard members to qualify as veterans under New York State law.

From CCUSA - Re: **Appropriations:** Requests Congress to support vulnerable populations, including disaster-affected communities, individuals experiencing financial hardship, survivors of human trafficking, and others who depend on assistance thru the DHS programs. Also, for Congress to support DOJ grant programs that serve youth, families, and communities affected by crime.

Agriculture appropriations: Urges Congress to increase funding for critical programs that address food insecurity (At a minimum, that funding levels be maintained). That the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) be fully funded.

Introduced: Trafficking Survivors Relief Act of 2025 - Urges swift passage as the bill provides support for survivors of human trafficking, allowing them to vacate certain convictions and arrests that are directly related to their victimization. This legislation would reduce barriers so that survivors could access resources critical for their recovery.

Housing: **Update on The ROAD to Housing Act of 2025** - The Senate passed the ROAD Act as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act. This action moves the country towards building more housing and bringing down housing costs. It helps military families, veterans, and other Americans access affordable housing.

Federal Updates:

Unaccompanied Children Program (UCP) - Appropriations to provide increased funding for legal services for unaccompanied children which would help ensure these children receive a fair process for seeking safety from danger, while substantially improving the efficiency for the nation's severely overburdened immigration court system.

Fair Day in Court for Kids Act - Would provide unaccompanied children with legal representation when they appear in proceedings before an immigration judge.

Pope Leo released his apostolic exhortation, *Dilexi te* which reminds the Church and all people of good will that those who are poor do not lose the inherent dignity they have as human beings, nor is their dignity in any way diminished by lacking material goods, knowledge, or physical and mental abilities.

Thank you for your advocacy.

Marie Copeland, Chair