

Dear Catholic advocate,

We are writing to let you know of an important and exciting change coming to Catholic advocacy efforts across WA state. We at the WSCC, along with our statewide partners at the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center (IPJC), Catholic Community Services of Western Washington (CCSWW), Catholic Charities Serving Central WA, Catholic Charities of Eastern WA, St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP), CCS Network Builders, PREPARES, Jesuits West, and local parish representatives have been discerning for almost two years now regarding a **new model for Catholic advocacy that empowers each of you to advocate year-round from within your parishes.**

As part of that discernment, we have been reviewing the impact of and participation at Catholic Advocacy Day (CAD). Catholic Advocacy Day has been a great source of joy to so many for decades – a beautiful example of faith, friendship, and advocacy on behalf of the common good. In recent years, however, we have seen a significant decline in attendance at CAD in its current configuration. In addition, lawmakers often express how much they appreciate meeting with our Catholic parishes when they are not in session and not so pressed for time, and the opportunity to learn about all we do within our local communities. This type of off-session relationship-building makes all the types of advocacy we do during the legislative session that much more impactful. After thoughtful consideration of where we can do the most good with limited resources, **we have decided to retire the Catholic Advocacy Day (CAD) model**, and we will no longer gather each year in February/March as an organized group at the Capitol in Olympia during the legislative session. We will still encourage advocates to continue to reach out to their representative on their own on matters of import during the legislative session. The WSCC will also continue to issue Action Alerts during our weekly Catholic Advocacy Bulletin to advise you on when to sign in to advocate for or against legislation virtually, and when to send messages to your legislators. At the same time, we will focus on supporting year round Catholic advocacy efforts in a variety of different ways.

We invite you to join us in the planning and implementation of this new year-round model of Catholic Advocacy! At the local level, the Washington State Catholic Conference (WSCC) is available to facilitate training of parish groups in *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, as well as in Catholic Social Teaching. Before the 2022 Legislative Session begins, the WSCC will also make available, via its website, a variety of advocacy models provided by the groups mentioned above. Parishes can implement these issue-based models, with the approval of their pastors, so that parish groups can establish a year-round relationship with their lawmakers. One such model will be a step-by-step guide to holding legislator meetings outside of Olympia. Parishioners will be able to make their voices heard, in-person or via a virtual platform, on issues that are important to their local communities at any time of the year.

If you are interested in joining us in further planning of this year-round Catholic advocacy effort, or if you would like to lead in getting your parish involved in year-round Catholic advocacy, please email us at the Washington State Catholic Conference at [WSCC@WACatholics.org](mailto:WSCC@WACatholics.org). Thank you for all of your past and current advocacy efforts. We look forward to co-creating this new way of being together.

In solidarity,

