



**California  
Catholic  
Conference**

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March 30, 2026

The Honorable Buffy Wicks, Chair  
Assembly Appropriations Committee  
1021 O Street, Room 8220  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1763 (Lee) Pupil attendance: excused absences: religious observance - SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Wicks and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

The California Catholic Conference is pleased to express its support for **AB 1763**, and introduced on 2/9/26, which strengthens existing law to ensure that students may be excused from school to observe religious holidays or ceremonies without unnecessary administrative barriers.

The bishops of California have long affirmed that parents are the primary educators of their children and that students should have the freedom to practice their faith fully and without impediment. Current law appropriately recognizes religious observance as a valid reason for an excused absence. AB 1763 builds on this foundation by removing procedural hurdles that can unintentionally limit or discourage students from participating in important moments of religious life.

This bill reflects core principles of Catholic teaching, particularly the dignity of the human person and the importance of religious liberty. Faith formation is not separate from a student's development; it is integral to the formation of the whole person. Allowing students to participate in religious observances supports their spiritual growth, strengthens families, and honors the diversity of religious traditions present throughout California.

AB 1763 also promotes fairness and consistency by ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have equitable access to practice their beliefs. In doing so, it contributes to the common good by fostering respect, inclusion, and understanding within our school communities.

For these reasons, as the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in California, we urge you to vote "AYE" on AB 1763. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact Samara Palko, Director of Education, at 916-477-0631 or [spalko@cacatholic.org](mailto:spalko@cacatholic.org).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Domingo".

Kathleen Domingo  
Executive Director

KBD:SP:mip