



April 9, 2026

The Honorable Thomas Umberg, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee
1021 O Street, Room 6610
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 941 (Padilla) Private Detention facilities: canteens

Dear Chair Umberg and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

The California Catholic Conference SUPPORTS SB 941 (Padilla) as introduced on 1/29/26. This bill would prohibit the sale price of canteen items at a private detention center from exceeding a 35 percent markup above the amount paid to a vendor for the item.

A canteen is a store located in a detention facility where the incarcerated can purchase toiletries, snacks, and other personal items. In 2023, the Legislature enacted SB 474 to temporarily cap the markup of canteen items in state prisons to no more than 35 percent of the price that CDCR paid the vendor. SB 474 does not apply to private detention centers, leaving detained individuals in those facilities without comparable consumer protections.

Church teaching directs attention to the ways in which prison systems (including commissary/canteen structures) can create economic injustice. Detained individuals typically earn about one dollar per day through facility work programs. Because commissary prices far exceed what detained individuals can afford, the financial burden is often shifted to families, many of whom are already experiencing economic hardship. Incarcerated families and their loved ones are already saddled with copious, justice-related fees, fines and debt.

SB 941 ensures that those in federal detention have the same access to reasonable canteen prices as those incarcerated in our state prisons. For those reasons as the official public policy voice for the Catholic Church of California, we request that you vote "AYE" on SB 941. Should you have any questions regarding our position please contact Linda Wanner, Director for Social Justice & Environmental Stewardship at 916.208.4462.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen Domingo
Executive Director

KD:LW:mip

cc: The Honorable Stephen Padilla, Author, CA State Senate