

## Coerced Participation in Physician Assisted Suicide

As noted in last week's bulletin article, physician assisted suicide (**PAS**) is a euphemism for when a physician helps a patient kill him/herself. It's a great moral evil.

The following is a current example of a governmental entity (like a federal, state or local agency) seeking to force physicians to participate in that killing despite religious objections:

California is one of nine states (CA, CO, HI, ME, NJ, NM, OR, VT, and WA) which have legislatively permitted PAS.<sup>[1]</sup> Doctors there sued to stop California from enforcing certain provisions in the PAS law they contended would force them to participate in PAS.

After 15 months of litigation, California settled. Clarifying what the plaintiffs said were ambiguities in the law and what the court said were illegalities, California agreed last month not to seek any criminal or civil punishment against a physician for refusal or failure to:

- *document* a patient's request for PAS;
- *provide information* to a patient about PAS (other than the fact that the physician does not provide it); or
- *refer* a patient to another physician when the patient seeks such referral for the purpose of obtaining PAS.

California also agreed to pay the plaintiffs \$300,000 to cover legal fees they spent to obtain this settlement.

Be aware that opposing state laws which compel participation in violations of human dignity can be difficult and costly. But the effort is necessary if that dignity is to be protected.

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[1] [https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/california-backs-down-on-forcing-doctors-to-participate-in-assisted-suicide-in-pro-life-victory/?utm\\_source=featured-news&utm\\_campaign=usa](https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/california-backs-down-on-forcing-doctors-to-participate-in-assisted-suicide-in-pro-life-victory/?utm_source=featured-news&utm_campaign=usa)