

## Report from Friends Committee on Legislation of California

June 29, 2017

Dear Friends,

The national political climate has lent a new sense of urgency to California's legislative session, and thanks to your financial support and activism, FCLCA is able to respond, bringing your "voice of conscience" to the Capitol. All bills that are moving forward are now in the second house and it is one of the busiest times of the year.

**FCLCA has taken action on 65 bills this year – writing letters in support or opposition, testifying in committee hearings, making lobby visits and organizing grassroots efforts with emails, phone calls and in-district visits. You can see a list of these bills by going to [www.fclca.org](http://www.fclca.org), and clicking on "Action Center."**

**They include:**

- **31 bills on criminal justice reform.** Our co-sponsored bill, Senate Bill 180, to repeal sentencing enhancements for prior drug convictions, **passed the Senate on May 15 with a vote of 22-13!** The bill's author, Sen. Holly Mitchell, has spoken of the urgent need to "begin undoing the damage of the failed War on Drugs." SB 180 has also passed the Assembly Public Safety Committee and now moves to the Assembly Floor, where it faces a tough vote.  
  
FCLCA activists sent in over 1,230 messages to their legislators via petitions and the FCLCA Action Alert system. FCLCA volunteers also attended in-person, in-district meetings with the legislators' staff – which had a huge impact on those legislators!
- **13 bills on economic justice**, including important bills on expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and on expanding parental leave. In support of EITC expansion -- a key way to address California's high poverty rate – your FCLCA lobbyist testified in committee and FCLCA Action Network members generated 516 messages to legislators in 36 hours.
- **9 bills on one of this session's most important issues: protecting immigrants and religious minorities.** With your support, FCLCA has been very active in lobbying for Senate Bill 54, to make California a "sanctuary state." The great news is that SB 54 has already passed the Senate and the Assembly Public Safety Committee. It still faces a difficult hurdle in passing the Assembly. Along with interfaith partners like the California Catholic Conference, California Church Impact and the National Council of Jewish Women, and through a wide coalition of community organizations, FCLCA has organized petitions, visits and lobbying here at the Capitol in support of this important bill. FCLCA activists are visiting and calling their legislators in their districts in an attempt to move Assembly members from "on the fence" to a YES vote. FCLCA was a key organizer of a meeting between Governor Brown's staff and 25 representatives of statewide religious denominations and faith-based advocacy groups.
- **11 environmental justice bills**, including SB 623, to create a fund for safe and affordable drinking water for all Californians (did you know that over one million residents

of our state face issues with unsafe drinking water?) and AB 885, which mandates that schools take measures to ensure lead-free water is available for children to drink.

Your contributions as volunteers, activists and donors are making this year one of our most active ever in terms of grassroots involvement. FCLCA supporters have organized or attended more than a dozen in-district visits with legislators – thank you!

Because knowledge is power, the FCL Education Fund, too, is helping build the movement for a more just and compassionate California by providing detailed information on the legislative process and how to effectively weigh in through our guidebook, ***Bring Your Voice: FCLCA's Guide to Grassroots Lobbying and the California Legislature***. We've been sharing it with community organizations working on the bills we support and we're hearing back from them that they find it "extremely helpful." It's available free online:

<http://www.fclca.org/images/stories/pdfs/bringyourvoicefinal.pdf>

### **Opportunities for You to Lobby**

**Green California Advocacy Day; Wednesday, August 30 in Sacramento, Location TBA.** Focus: Key environmental issues. Contact us for information.

**In-district visits:** If you are interested in doing an in-district visit, contact Kevan Insko, our Director of Program and Organizational Development, at [kevan@fclca.org](mailto:kevan@fclca.org) with your address and she'll let you know if your legislator is uncommitted on one of our key bills, particularly Senate Bill 180 and Senate Bill 54.

### **Actions you can take as individuals:**

Go to <http://cqrcengage.com/fclca/home>

- Take action on any Action Alerts listed there
- Sign up to receive future Action Alerts

Join FCLCA as a contributing member at [www.fclca.org](http://www.fclca.org). Your contributions support an FCLCA lobbyist at the Capitol and a program of grassroots lobbying to bring a voice of conscience when laws are made. Your support makes all the difference. Checks can be made out to FCLCA and directed to:

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