



# NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

## **CA Catholic Bishops Salute “SAFE California” Campaign; Group Collects 800,000 Signatures for Death Penalty Replacement in November**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Thursday, March 1, 2012**

**CONTACT:** Carol Hogan or Steve Pehanich  
916/313-4000

*The following statement was issued by the Most Rev. Gerald Wilkerson, auxiliary bishop for the San Fernando Pastoral Region of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and president of the California Catholic Conference of Bishops on news that “Safe California” has collected 800,000 signatures on their petition for a November ballot measure asking voters to repeal the state’s death penalty:*

“We congratulate the *SAFE California* campaign upon reaching their goal of collecting enough signatures to assure there will be a proposition on California’s November ballot to replace the death penalty with the sentence of Life Without the Possibility of Parole.

“We were pleased to have participated in this effort by encouraging our parishioners to collect signatures and are gratified that we could join the many other individuals and groups who helped the sponsors of this initiative. We would like to personally thank all the Catholic volunteers who stepped forward and worked hard on the effort.

“Now, in November, California’s voters will be offered the chance to make this prudent, life-affirming, safety-enhancing and cost-savings change in sentencing law. Moreover, passing this initiative will prevent the execution an innocent person.

“We look forward to the *SAFE California* campaign as a time when the voting public can learn of the wisdom of replacing the sentence of death with the sentence of life imprisonment.”

#####

*(Eds: The California Catholic Conference is the public advocacy office of the Bishops of California. Representing the Cardinal of Los Angeles, the Archbishop of San Francisco and the Bishops of Fresno, Monterey, Oakland, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Jose, Santa Rosa and Stockton it is the official voice of the 10 million Catholics and their many parishes, schools, universities, social service agencies in California.)*