



## The *Christian Medical & Dental Associations* Case

**Case Name:** *Christian Medical & Dental Associations v. Bonta*

**Case Status:** Filed in federal court on February 22, 2022

**Significance:** Whether the government can force health care professionals to participate in the process of physician-assisted suicide.



**Background:** On January 1, 2022, the state of California implemented [SB-380](#), legislation that forces physicians to participate in the process of assisted suicide, even when the doctor has conscientious objections. The law mandates that a doctor take steps to help the patient commit suicide – and then claims that this is not “participating” in the deadly process. The Christian Medical & Dental Associations (CMDA) consists of health care professionals, including many who practice in California, whose personal religious convictions and professional ethics oppose the practice of assisted suicide. Alliance Defending Freedom filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of CMDA to prevent the government from forcing health care professionals to violate their conscience.

### Key Points:

- The government has no business forcing doctors to participate in procedures that lead to the taking of human life.
- Doctors shouldn't be forced to participate in the death of a patient they've sworn to protect.
- Doctors and medicines are supposed to help and heal, not kill.
- We have trusted physicians to be healers when possible and to provide comfort when healing is no longer possible.

### Key Facts:

- CMDA deeply believes that suffering patients need understanding and sound medical treatment, not encouragement to kill themselves. The state has no authority to order them to act contrary to that sincere conviction.
- The [American Medical Association's Code of Ethics states](#) that assisted suicide is “incompatible with the physician's role as healer [and] would be difficult or impossible to control...”
- The [Affordable Care Act states](#) that health care professionals must not be forced to participate in causing assisted suicide.
- Before the bill was signed into law, two legislative committee [analyses](#) raised concerns about forcing doctors to participate in the process of assisted suicide. One also affirmed that requiring physicians to take these steps forces them to “affirmatively facilitate” assisted suicide.

**The Bottom Line:** The government shouldn't force health care professionals to violate medical ethics or their religious convictions to practice medicine.