

BARRETT SPARED BIGOTED ATTACK; STELLAR PERFORMANCE

Weeks before the Senate Judiciary Committee began its hearings on the nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett to the U.S. Supreme Court, Bill Donohue predicted that she was not likely to be subjected to another round of anti-Catholic assaults like she endured in 2017 when she was being considered for an appellate job. He was right.

Donohue reasoned that those who made Catholic-bashing remarks three years ago paid a heavy price for doing so, and would therefore be more careful this time. It was also too close to the election for bigoted politicians to go down this road again.

The Catholic League played a major role in putting these unjust critics of Barrett on the defensive in 2017. More than any other Catholic organization, we led the fight against Barrett's foes. We did so again in 2020.

When Barrett was grilled in 2017, we issued 10 news releases on her, garnering 32 media hits: we were cited on TV, radio, newspaper, and internet stories. Most important, we mobilized Catholics to contact Senator Charles Grassley, who chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee when Barrett was being considered for the appellate position. They did so in droves.

On September 17, 2017, Donohue wrote to Senator Dick Durbin and Senator Dianne Feinstein objecting to their line of questioning. In both instances, Catholic-baiting questions and comments were made. What made this news release special was providing our subscribers with Grassley's email address: they let him know of their concerns.

In Donohue's statement to the media, he said, "Senator Durbin and Senator Feinstein came perilously close to applying a

religious test to circuit court nominee Amy Coney Barrett. Such a test is unconstitutional.”

On October 31, 2017, Grassley took to the floor commenting on Barrett’s critics, noting that “Others have spoken on the issue of a ‘religious test’ but I’ll remind my colleagues the Constitution” bars such a measure. He added that “we received many letters on this topic.” We made sure he did.

What we did in 2017 paid a huge dividend in 2020. We knew there would be some “oblique shots” at her religion, as Donohue put it, but nothing like what happened last time.

The media sought out Donohue for several TV and radio interviews, and many internet sites picked up our news releases. Mike McDonald, our new communications director, was also interviewed on TV and radio. The Catholic League presence in this controversy was significant.

While anti-Catholic politicians still exist, we are here to stop them.