

BOSTON POLS VIOLATE CHURCH-STATE LINES

Three members of the Boston City Council, led by Councilor Jerry P. McDermott, are seeking a referendum on the operations of the Archdiocese of Boston. If they succeed in getting their motion approved, the following question will appear on the November 8 ballot:

“Do you agree, to date, the Archdiocese of Boston has failed to work effectively with Boston’s neighborhoods to mitigate the impacts of Catholic parish and school closings on neighborhood services; and that in the future the Archdiocese of Boston should be strongly urged to meet its institutional obligations to all of Boston’s citizens, to neighbors, and to the city’s agencies by cooperating before-the-fact, diligently and in good faith, for the difficult transitions?”

Catholic League president William Donohue commented on this today:

“It is disingenuous and downright dishonest of Councilor McDermott to say, ‘We understand the separation of church and state, but we think it needs to be made crystal clear how the voting public feels.’ Then take a poll, Councilor McDermott. No, the real purpose of this measure is to intimidate the Archdiocese of Boston by having an arm of the state whip the public into a frenzy about matters they have no constitutional business sticking their noses into. It not only smacks of total disrespect for the principle of separation of church and state, it smacks of bias: If the goal is public accountability of private organizations, why focus exclusively on the Catholic Church? Why not go for broke and get the Protestants, Jews and Muslims to answer to the public as well?

“Just imagine what McDermott would say if it were proposed by

a group of concerned clergy that there be a referendum on the ballot asking the public whether it would be wise to mandate that all bills being considered by the city council first be vetted by the clergy? He'd be outraged. Which only shows his duplicity on this issue.

"This is sheer, unadulterated demagoguery. We will contact the other members of the city council to shoot down this preposterous measure."