

CATHOLIC BASHING IN COLORADO: PANDORA'S BOX OPENS FOR TEACHERS

The Colorado legislature has been considering bills that would loosen or lift the statutes of limitations for child sexual abuse lawsuits. Because the legislation was to apply only to private institutions—and was specifically designed to affect the Catholic schools, but not public schools—Catholic League president William Donohue e-mailed the entire legislature on February 1 asking that the bills blanket all institutions equally. Amendments that would do just that are now being considered. Donohue commented on the latest development today:

“The whole nation is getting quite a lesson in the politics of child sexual abuse as it is being played out in Colorado. The Catholic Church, led by Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput, does not oppose legislation that would amend the statutes of limitations for all institutions, public as well as private. But guess who's balking? The Colorado education establishment. The Colorado Association of School Boards and the Colorado Association of School Executives are still 'studying' the bills, while the Colorado Education Association (CEA) is speaking out against them. It looks like the Catholic-bashing crusade has opened Pandora's box for Colorado's teachers: they're in a lose-lose situation.

“The CEA has quite a record dealing with child abusers. Indeed, in 1997 it spent a small fortune trying to intimidate the parents of children who brought suit against an alleged child molester: the CEA launched a libel suit. According to one media account, the CEA pursued the accusers 'as if they were all conspirators in a right-wing plot to overthrow the public education system rather than concerned, fearful

parents....'

"Doing the CEA's bidding is Rep. Terrance Carroll. Yesterday, he said that the Catholic Church's insistence that the public schools should be covered by all legislation 'thoroughly disgusts me.' That's funny, the day before he said that amending the bills to include the public schools was done so he could 'call the Catholic Church's bluff.' Looks like he lost."