

CATHOLICS SPARED DAWN JOHNSEN

Dawn Johnsen has decided to withdraw her name from consideration as an appointee in the Justice Department; she was picked by President Obama to lead the Office of Legal Counsel. Commenting on her decision is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

The Catholic League is delighted that Catholics will not have to contend with Dawn Johnsen running an influential office in the Obama administration. As we said many times, in the late 1980s, Johnsen worked on a case that sought to strip the Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status, simply because the Church is opposed to abortion. There is no end to the number of religions that support abortion rights, though no one in the pro-life community has ever sought to deny these religions their tax-exempt status.

What makes this victory so sweet is that President Obama renominated her this year after her nomination failed to reach the Senate last year. It does not speak well for the president that he was so determined to put an anti-Catholic in his administration.

I am glad that I wrote to every member of the Senate on March 4, asking just one question: "Are you aware that Dawn Johnsen, who will soon be voted upon by the full Senate, sought to strip the Roman Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status in 1988?"

Last January, the *New York Times* said that objections to Johnsen's nomination were "baseless." But they were never baseless to Catholics, nor to those who oppose religious bigotry.