

CHILD RAPE IN NEW YORK STATE: LOCATION MATTERS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue tells of the real-life consequences of what would happen if a bill by New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey passed today:

“An 18-year-old who was allegedly raped by a public school teacher the week after Thanksgiving is out of luck—the 90 day clock allowed by law to file a claim for an offense in a public institution is up. But a student who was allegedly raped in a Catholic or Jewish school when JFK was president could bring suit (for one year, there is no time limit on claims affecting private institutions). After a year, a student in a Catholic or Jewish school would still have 3,650 more days to file a claim than a victim from the public schools (the current five year period to file a claim would be expanded to 10 years).

“There is another bill, sponsored by Vito Lopez, that would not discriminate on the basis of location. Eric Schneiderman, chairman of the Senate Codes Committee, says that the glaring disparity might be addressed in future legislation. ‘Just because it [the Markey bill] does not broaden the rights of victims 100 percent does not mean we should not try to broaden their rights somewhat.’ His argument collapses, of course, when considering the Lopez bill: it would cover 100 percent of the victims. It’s time lawmakers like Schneiderman explained why the Markey bill, which promotes discrimination, is a more just outcome than the Lopez bill, which does not.”

Contact him at schneiderman@senate.state.ny.us