

# DURBIN'S SCORECARD GETS AN "F"

Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois yesterday released a report, "Evaluating the Votes and Actions of Public Officials from a Catholic Perspective," which ranks the twenty-four U.S. Catholic senators based on their votes in three areas: domestic, international and pro-life. The issues were taken from a publication issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Faithful Citizenship." Referring to bishops who have said they may deny Communion to pro-abortion politicians, Durbin said they "cross the line in terms of what most Catholic Americans find acceptable regarding the relationship between their church and their government."

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today:

"To say that a senator votes better on Catholic issues because he has voted to increase the minimum wage while voting against a ban on killing a baby who is 80 percent born is ludicrous. Senator Durbin has done the same as some House Democrats last month, lumping together policy issues that do not have the same moral weight. The Vatican's recent document on Catholic politicians, echoing the pope, states that Catholic lawmakers have '*a grave and clear obligation to oppose any law that attacks human life*' [emphasis in original]. The U.S. bishops, in the very same document used by Durbin to form the scorecard, call this '*the fundamental moral measure of their [lawmakers'] service.*' Saying otherwise is a disgraceful misrepresentation of Catholic teaching.

"Durbin has even gone so far as to say that the '*right to religious belief and the separation between church and state*' may be '*compromised*' by bishops who impose sanctions on pro-abortion lawmakers. This is ironic, coming from the senator who on the Judiciary Committee enforced a *de facto* religious

test barring pro-life Catholics from the federal bench. The fact of the matter is that the bishops have not only the right but the duty to speak on moral issues that play out in the public sphere; and Durbin's inflammatory rhetoric is a blatant attempt to muzzle them."