

EEOC-CHARLOTTE UNDER SCRUTINY

The following letter was written today by Catholic League president Bill Donohue to Reuben Daniels, Jr., director of the Equal Employment Opportunity District Office in Charlotte, North Carolina:

Dr. William Thierfelder, president of Belmont Abbey College, was notified in March that an investigation by your office of alleged wrongdoing was closed. At issue was the right of a Catholic college not to provide coverage for abortion, artificial contraception and voluntary sterilization. Now he has been informed that the case has been reopened.

Would you please submit to me all documentation, including e-mails, office memos, and the like, that are relevant to this reversal? For example, if an error in judgment was initially made, it is important to know what it was and who made it. It is also vitally important to know the exact reasons why this case has been resurrected, and whose decision it was.

I am not pointing fingers, just doing my job. And that job is to combat discrimination against Catholics and defamation against the institutional Church. As you know, the First Amendment insulates religious decision-making from the purview of state authorities in most instances. If it is your position that the First Amendment is not operative in this case, I would appreciate knowing why.

This issue arises at a time when millions of Catholics, led by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, are gravely concerned about religious rights being jeopardized under new health care bills. It is important, therefore, that you allay our concerns by providing evidence that there is no animus against Belmont Abbey, a Catholic institution.

Contact: Reuben.Daniels@eeoc.gov