

FAITH-BASED HIRING IS ESSENTIAL

Yesterday, the House of Representatives passed a bill that would allow faith-based organizations to receive federal funds for job training even if they chose to hire only persons who belong to their religion. The bill now goes to the Senate for approval.

Catholic League president William Donohue supports the bill:

“Any bill that purports to help faith-based organizations provide social services but imposes hiring restrictions on them is a sham. If Catholic social service organizations cannot insist on hiring Catholics, then it becomes indistinguishable from any government-sponsored program. Given that the entire purpose of funding faith-based programs is to provide equity—to allow them to compete with non-sectarian programs for federal dollars—it is meaningless to say they can compete for money as long as they gut their identity. It would be more manly to simply say ‘buzz off.’

“Section 703 of the 1964 Civil Rights Act specifically allows religious organizations to consider religion in hiring. That’s because those who passed the bill understood that to do otherwise would undermine the ability of religious organizations to function properly. Why some can’t see this today—or choose not to—is disconcerting, to say the least.

“Howard Dean must act now. He is the one who has been saying for the past month that his party is not hostile to people of faith. Unfortunately, the vote for this bill split largely along party lines, with his party voting to oppose it. For Dean to duck this issue would be a grave mistake.”