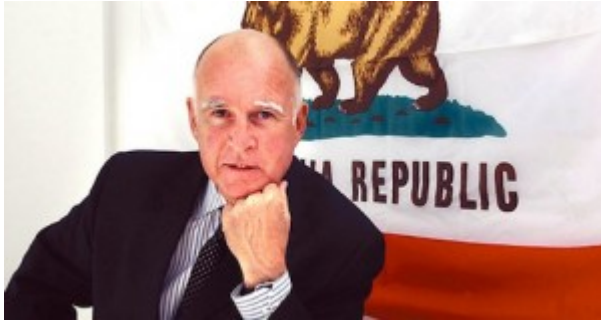


# GOV. BROWN VETOES SEX ABUSE BILL



Bill Donohue comments on the decision by California Governor Jerry Brown to veto a sexual abuse bill that lifted the statute of limitations for cases of alleged molestation if the incident occurred in private institutions:

Governor Brown saw right through the machinations of those who selectively sought to allow alleged victims of sexual abuse another chance to file suit. He properly noted that legislation passed a decade ago already covered the Catholic Church, so there was no need to do so again. But most important, he denounced the politics involved. "This extraordinary extension of the statute of limitations, which legislators chose not to apply to public institutions, is simply too open-ended and unfair," he said.

I personally wrote to Governor Brown citing the sexual abuse of students at Miramonte Elementary School in Los Angeles. To think that they would be excluded from the bill sponsored by Sen. James Beall Jr., simply because they were abused at a public school, is mindboggling. But that's what would have happened. I am delighted that Governor Brown saw fit to mention Miramonte in his statement. He said those students who were assaulted "are no less worthy because of the institution they attended."

The Catholic League contacted over 1,000 parishes in

California, all the lawmakers, and every one of our members in the state asking them to demand justice. But the real heroes are the bishops of California, led by Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez.

The final proof that this bill was driven more by anti-Catholicism than any alleged interest in child welfare came when Republicans tried to amend the Beall legislation to include public institutions. It was defeated. To engage in bigotry is always wrong, but it is particularly despicable when it is done under the guise of protecting children.

Kudos to Governor Brown.