

JUSTICE MUST PREVAIL IN ALBANY



Bill Donohue comments on bills pending in the New York State capital:

No one who purports to be interested in the sexual abuse of minors can be taken seriously if his bill exempts the majority of institutions where the molestation occurs. That is why Assemblywoman Margaret Markey is not an honest broker: her bill lifting the statute of limitations gives the public schools a pass. Indeed, with the exception of 2009, every bill she ever introduced has exempted public institutions. The one time she included them, the public school establishment went bonkers.

There are other bills that make more sense. Sen. Brad Hoylman has amended his bill to cover public entities, and he is to be commended for doing so. Still, the bill introduced by Assemblyman Mike Cusick and Sen. Andrew Lanza is preferable.

Their bill would prospectively extend the age by which victims could bring a lawsuit from 23 to 28. It would also apply equally to both the private and public sectors. What it will not do is to provide a “look-back” period where suits can be filed for alleged abuse occurring decades ago.

There are fundamental civil libertarian reasons why the statute of limitations is on the books—memories fade, witnesses die—and that is why they need to be maintained.

There is another reason, rooted more in politics than law, why the Cusick-Lanza bill is preferable: those who harbor an animus against the Catholic Church would not be able to

exploit this issue to suit their ideological and financial interests. Quite frankly, there is no organized legal effort to bilk any demographic group or institution other than Catholics and the Church.

Lawmakers Cusick and Lanza need to learn of your support.

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