

KEEP NYC CARRIAGE HORSES



Bill Donohue comments on New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's plan to ban carriage horses from the streets of New York:

It is not easy to unite the editorial boards of the *New York Times*, *New York Post*, *Daily News*, the labor unions, and the public (64 percent want to keep the carriage horses), but Mayor Bill de Blasio has done it: all oppose his plan to ban the horse-drawn cabs that New Yorkers, as well as tourists from all over the world, have come to identify as a classic New York experience; there's nothing like that ride through Central Park. Here's one more reason: It would have a disparate impact on Catholics.

On December 31, 2013, on the eve of his becoming mayor, I criticized de Blasio for his pledge to ban the carriage horses from New York; I cited his preference for protecting horses over unborn babies. I was subsequently contacted by an official in the carriage horse profession who informed me that this business is dominated by Catholics. Indeed, I was told by this person in the Horse & Carriage Association of New York City that "The horse & carriage industry in NYC is overwhelmingly Catholic, [and] by the way, the bulk of our folks being from Ireland, Italy, Brazil, and Latin America."

It would be unfair to accuse Mayor de Blasio of intentionally discriminating against Catholics for his advocacy of this proposal, and I am certainly not attributing bias to him. On the other hand, he is a big opponent of public policies that

have a disparate impact on demographic groups. Indeed, last month he hailed an agreement between the City of New York and minority firefighters who belong to the Vulcan Society: the latter charged that the existing civil service exams for firefighter applicants has a disparate impact on African Americans and Hispanics.

Well, banning the horse carriage industry would have a “disparate impact” on Catholics. We ask the mayor to reconsider his proposal.

Contact Mayor de Blasio's Press Office:
pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov