

# LAWMAKER MARKEY RIPS BISHOP DIMARZIO

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addresses remarks made yesterday by New York Assemblywoman Margaret Markey:

Catholics in New York State are very concerned about a bill sponsored by Assemblywoman Margaret Markey that would discriminate against the Catholic Church by opening the door to endless claims of sexual abuse while at the same time giving the public schools a pass. Obviously, Catholic leaders oppose her bill and much prefer the legislation sponsored by Assemblyman Vito Lopez which would establish an equal playing field for private and public institutions alike. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio would vigorously oppose Markey's bill and support Lopez's effort. What is surprising is the disturbing language used by Markey in retaliation.

Markey has accused Bishop DiMarzio of being "on the borderline of jeopardizing his not-for-profit status." She also went so far as to warn him: "If I were the bishop, I would walk very cautiously."

I have news for Markey: If I were her, I would not try to intimidate a bishop. Not only does she show absolutely no respect for the First Amendment provisions guaranteeing freedom of speech and freedom of religion, her attempt to silence any religious leader shows utter contempt for elementary standards of decency.

I might add that her silence in the wake of countless efforts by leaders of other religions working against legislation they find inimical to the best interests of their community smacks of prejudice and duplicity. If she wants to sponsor legislation that would muzzle the free speech of all religious

leaders, then she should do so. Failing that, she should get off her high horse and stop with her ugly threats against Bishop DiMarzio.

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