

# NO EXEMPTIONS FOR PLANNED PARENTHOOD

In many parts of the country, legislators are mandating that members of the clergy report sex abuse crimes that come to their attention. This is all fine and good except that these laws typically do not require that every adult who interacts with youngsters must do likewise. Particularly egregious is the exemption given to abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood.

The Catholic League has begun a campaign asking state legislators to end the exemptions. For example, last spring it was revealed that Planned Parenthood employees agreed to keep secret 91 percent of the reported cases of statutory rape that came to their attention.

Moreover, when the New York state legislature considered a mandated sexual abuse bill last June, it was opposed not by the New York State Catholic Conference but by the New York Civil Liberties Union and Family Planning Advocates. They thought it appropriate that the clergy be forced to report such cases but asked for an exemption for those engaged in medical and counseling services. Thus did they reveal their real agenda: get the clergy but give abortion counselors a pass.

Just as disturbing is the story in the October 31 edition of *Newsday* that mentioned the irresponsible comments of Nassau County legislature presiding officer Judith Jacobs. She lambasted Denis Dillon for suggesting that the sexual abuse bill being considered be extended to abortion providers as well. She charged that Dillon “crossed the line between his personal beliefs and upholding the law.” William Donohue said to the media, “This comes dangerously close to suggesting that Dillon’s Catholicism is getting in the way of his professional

duties.”

If these bills are not made inclusive to cover counselors, social workers, abortion providers et al., then they will be seen for what they are: political gamesmanship aimed at getting the clergy. It will also demonstrate the selective interest that lawmakers have in protecting minors from adult predators.