

# NOTRE DAME PROFESSORS FILE CATHOLIC LEAGUE BRIEFS

Two professors from Notre Dame Law School, Gerard Bradley and Rick Garnett, are each filing a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of the Catholic League in two very important cases affecting school vouchers that the U.S. Supreme Court will rule on next term.

In the first case, a coalition of liberal organizations is relying on anti-Catholic legislation to defeat a voucher program in Colorado designed to help poor minorities. The program, recently signed into law by Colorado Governor Bill Owens, allows poor students attending failing public schools to attend private or parochial schools.

Fighting the law are Americans United for Separation of Church and State, People for the American Way, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Colorado chapter of the NAACP, the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association.

Representing the Catholic League in this case is Professor Bradley. In a statement to the press, William Donohue commented as follows: "This is quite remarkable. The professed advocates of tolerance and diversity, who never tire of championing the rights of minorities, are shamelessly going to the well of anti-Catholicism to punish African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans."

The liberal coalition is relying on a clause in the Colorado constitution that was modeled after the notoriously anti-Catholic legislation of Congressman James Blaine. Written in the 19th century, the Blaine amendments were used by the Ku Klux Klan and others to force Catholic schoolchildren to

attend public [read: Protestant] schools. Now they are being used by liberals to stop poor minorities from advancing.

In another Blaine amendment case, Professor Garnett is writing an amicus brief for us that deals with a student from Washington state who won a partial college scholarship but was subsequently denied because he wanted to attend a college affiliated with the Assemblies of God. At stake is equal treatment before the law and the codification in law of a particular sectarian claim about the nature and role of religious belief. By the way, Garnett is working with some of his Jewish friends on this case; they also recognize the high stakes involved.

The Catholic League will be well represented before the high court. Bradley and Garnett are two highly competent constitutional scholars, as well as committed Catholics.