

PA CATHOLIC LAWMAKERS CRY FOUL

They are crying foul. What is really foul is the basis of the complaint made by Pennsylvania Catholic lawmakers: they are upset that priests are calling them out for working against their own religion.

In Pennsylvania, as in virtually all states, if a bill to lift the statute of limitations on offenses involving the sexual abuse of minors does not specifically say that it covers the public sector, it means that kids raped by public school teachers are treated like second-class citizens. To be exact, because of the antiquated doctrine of sovereign immunity, public school students have a very short window—usually 90 days—to press charges, otherwise they are out of luck.

The bill being considered by the Pennsylvania legislature gives the public schools a pass—the reform does not affect them. Which means that kids who are sexually abused in a public school, or were abused by a public school employee in the past, have less rights than private school students; the latter, under the proposed bill, could now sue for alleged offenses that took place decades ago.

The legislation has one purpose—to stick it to Catholics. If the intent were to allow justice for the victims of sexual abuse, the venue of the offense would be irrelevant. But it is very relevant. Indeed, it explains why so many parishes have called out Catholic lawmakers who support this discriminatory bill.

What did these legislators think would happen? They are pledged to represent all of their constituents, yet they decided to throw Catholics overboard—their own people—by supporting a bill that discriminates against them. Kudos to

the priests, and others, for letting everyone know who was behind this outrageous scam.