

PA LEGISLATOR BRINGS BIGOTRY TO VOUCHER DEBATE

A state representative from Pennsylvania, Joseph Preston, Jr., said yesterday that school vouchers would enable certain religious schools to pay for the cost of lawsuits involving pedophilia.

Rep. Preston specifically referred to “certain religions hit hard by a lot of lawsuits,” saying that “millions of dollars of certain faiths” were used to pay for court settlements. “I don’t want to see our money to be able to go for those different lawsuits for certain people who do not act appropriately,” he said. When questioned about which religion he was referring to, Rep. Preston got angry and said he was referring to different “systems” who have made court settlements. However, it was widely understood by those at the press conference that the lawmaker was targeting the Catholic Church.

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke to Rep. Preston today. Here is what transpired:

“I spoke to Rep. Preston today and found him to be rude and dishonest. When I asked him to explain himself, he accused me of being defensive about my group, thus acknowledging what everyone knows—his bigoted remarks were aimed at Catholics. He then contended that he was referring to certain ‘systems,’ not religions. When I asked him to identify those systems, he could not do so.

“I am writing to every member of the Pennsylvania legislature requesting that Rep. Preston be censured for his remarks. In addition, we will do everything we can to inform the voters in his Pittsburgh district that they are represented by an anti-Catholic bigot.

"The Catholic League applauds the quick and unequivocal response to this matter that was made by Pennsylvania Education Secretary Eugene Hickok. We look for the state legislators to do likewise. There is no place for bigots in our democratic system."