

PUBLIC SCHOOL ABUSE VICTIMS IN NY STATE: RELIEF IS ON THE WAY

Paul Vitello has a news story in today's *New York Times* reporting on the decision by New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey to amend her bill on the sexual abuse of children. Her previous bill only covered private institutions like the Catholic Church, leaving in place protections afforded public institutions. This led many Catholics to oppose her bill and support the one sponsored by Assemblyman Vito Lopez which treats public and private institutions equally. There is still one major difference between the two bills: Markey's allows for a one year suspension of the statute of limitations, thus permitting anyone to file a claim regardless of when the abuse occurred.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue outlined a new campaign:

The statute of limitations is an integral provision of justice, and that is why the Lopez bill is still preferable to Markey's new one. **But if Markey's bill prevails, the Catholic League will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in a massive public education campaign to alert those who have been sexually abused by a public school employee that they now have one year to sue the schools, even if the abuse took place when JFK was president. We will use every media outlet available.**

Our campaign will be limited to those victimized in public schools. Why? Because up until now, in New York and many other states, lawyers and professional victims' abuse advocates have waged a relentless campaign to exclusively stick it to Catholic institutions, all the while doing positively nothing to help those victimized by public school teachers. To even

the scales of justice, we will now copy-cat their tactics, only the target audience this time will be those molested in the public schools.

Markey is nothing if not dishonest. All along she insisted that her initial bill applied equally to private and public institutions. But if this were true, then there would have been no need to amend it.

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