

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY WINS

In May, the Religious Liberty Protection Act (RLPA) sailed through the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution. The bill protects religious practices from governmental interference. RLPA prohibits the government from placing a substantial burden on religious practices "unless it is the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling interest such as health or safety."

The legislation was supported by more than 80 religious groups and civil rights organizations, representing all the major world religions. The Catholic League was happy to join with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in supporting the bill.

It seemed as though everyone was in favor of this bill. But there was one exception: the ACLU. Initially, the ACLU supported the RLPA, but then it discovered that if it became law, it would protect landlords who deny lodging to unmarried couples on the basis of religious conviction. The ACLU, sensing this could hurt homosexuals, quickly reversed its position. So much for its commitment to the First Amendment guarantee of religious liberty.