

SCHOOL CHOICE NEEDED IN NEW ORLEANS

Catholic League president William Donohue praised the Bush administration today for approving federal aid to private schools in New Orleans. Furthermore, he is urging congressmen and senators to vote in favor of this measure. Here is his statement:

“Education Secretary Margaret Spellings has advanced a plan to help the parents of school-aged children in New Orleans to obtain the kind of quality education they deserve. Under the Bush administration proposal, \$488 million of the \$2 billion in federal aid would be earmarked for those parents who elect to send their children to private schools; 25 percent of New Orleans students had been enrolled in private schools, mostly Catholic. The total per-child allotment would not exceed \$7,500 and would be available to all displaced families.

“I am writing to every member of the House and Senate urging a quick approval of this proposal. This is more than an education issue—it is a matter of fundamental civil rights. Having been ravaged by Hurricane Katrina, the residents of New Orleans want to put their lives back together as soon as possible. What they don’t need now is for federal lawmakers to stand in their way by playing politics with the choices they make.

“To achieve the status quo ante, congressmen and senators must not discriminate on the basis of religion. That is why they need to affirm the decisions parents make. After all, it is their money and their kids.”