

“SEPARATE BUT EQUAL” IN COLORADO: BIGOTED LAW INTRODUCED

Last week the Catholic League criticized a bill introduced by Colorado Rep. Gwyn Green that would make it easier to sue private institutions in cases involving child sexual abuse. Our criticism centered on one objection: public institutions were given a pass. Rep. Green said at the time that she would introduce another bill that would address public institutions. She has now done so. Here is what Catholic League president Bill Donohue says about it:

“Rep. Green is to Colorado what George Wallace was to Alabama: a public official who promotes the invidious doctrine of ‘separate but equal.’ Just as it is morally and legally indefensible to have one law for whites and another for blacks, it is just as reprehensible to have one law for Catholic teachers and another law for public school teachers.

“Here’s what Green’s bills do: (a) if Johnny was abused last year in the Catholic schools—or was abused 50 years ago—the school can be sued, but if Johnny was abused in a public school over the same period, his parents are denied the right to sue (b) if Johnny is abused next year in a Catholic school, his parents can sue, but if Johnny is abused next year in a public school, the only way his parents can sue is if the school failed to conduct a background check of the teacher (c) if Johnny is abused in a Catholic school, it is possible—under the provision of ‘vicarious liability’—to sue the principal as well as the diocese, but if Johnny is abused in a public school, neither the principal nor the superintendent of schools can be sued, and (d) if Johnny is abused in a Catholic school, there is no monetary limit on what it can be sued for, but if Johnny is abused in a public school, the most the

school must pay is \$150,000.

“We are contacting the entire Colorado legislature about this matter. ‘Separate but equal,’ as the U.S. Supreme Court said in its 1954 Brown decision, is ‘inherently unequal.’ Nothing has changed since, and it matters not a whit whether the bigotry is based on race or religion.”

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