

# SEN. RUBIO SUBMITS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY BILL



Senator Marco Rubio introduced legislation today to repeal the Obama administration's mandate requiring healthcare plans to cover abortifacients, contraception and sterilization.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

The Catholic community will be delighted to learn of the courage shown by Sen. Marco Rubio in seeking to combat the Obama administration's unprecedented assault on religious liberty. If the administration were to get its way, Catholic non-profit institutions would be forced to carry healthcare services that the Church deems immoral. What's at stake is the First Amendment right to religious liberty, and nothing goes to the heart of this civil liberty more than conscience rights.

The Catholic League appreciates the incredible support we are receiving from people of all faiths, as well as from some agnostics and atheists. We pledge to them that we will support our bishops in pursuing every legitimate remedy to this outrageous threat to religious liberty. Sen. Rubio has properly titled his bill the "Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 2012."

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# ED KOCH PUSHES CATHOLIC-JEWISH TIES



Last week, former New York City Mayor Ed Koch spoke at a Jewish event in New York where he promoted strong Catholic-Jewish ties. “We’re 13 million Jews in the whole world—less than one-tenth of 1 percent. And we need allies. The best

ally we can have is the Catholic Church.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addressed Mayor Koch’s comments today:

In my 2009 book, *Secular Sabotage*, I said that Ed Koch was “one of the greatest friends that Catholics have ever had.” What he said last week only confirms his status—he is a genuine friend to Catholics. But it is not just Jews who need Catholics: the reverse is also true.

In the current edition of *Commentary*, an outstanding magazine with a long Jewish tradition, there is a chilling article by David Aikman, “The Worldwide Attack on Christians.” Aikman describes, in excruciating detail, how in 131 of the world’s 193 countries, Christian persecution is rampant; most of the oppression is occurring in Communist and Muslim-dominated nations. In other words, Christians need allies as well, and the Jewish community is the logical place for us to turn.

In the 1990s, I had several exchanges with A.M. Rosenthal of the *New York Times*. Like Koch, he was a Jewish heavyweight who often spoke about Christian persecution, and the need for Jews to align themselves with Catholics. Indeed, Rosenthal was ahead of the curve on this issue.

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the letter I received from Ed Koch today about two Orthodox Jewish attorneys who

recently made a series of incredibly anti-Catholic comments in a mid-Western courtroom; we are pushing for them to be disbarred, and the process is underway. Koch said, "I agree with you that the conduct displayed deserves maximum punishment."

The Catholic League is proud to stand with the Jewish community in this time of unrelenting attacks on both Catholics and Jews.

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## OBAMA HONORS CATHOLIC EDUCATORS



President Barack Obama recognized nine Catholic teachers today as "Champions of Catholic Education." Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented on this event as follows:

President Obama's recognition of Catholic education is much appreciated.

Ironically, it is precisely because so many Catholic schools serve non-Catholics in the inner city that Catholic schools, as well as all other non-profit Catholic institutions, have been disqualified by the Obama administration from receiving a religious exemption from mandated healthcare services: Catholic institutions that hire and serve non-Catholics are considered insufficiently religious by the Obama administration and must therefore provide sterilization and contraceptive services (including abortion-inducing drugs) in their healthcare plans starting next year.

Of course, Catholic institutions could qualify for a religious exemption immediately if they were to begin by discriminating against non-Catholics. But then these institutions would no longer be truly Catholic.

If Obama wants to make peace with Catholics, he can begin by respecting the conscience rights of Catholics and allow for a real religious exemption. I don't want to sound greedy, but if he really likes Catholic schools that much, perhaps he can pivot and endorse school vouchers. A lot of African Americans who struggle to send their kids to Catholic schools would deeply appreciate it.

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## WHY WARREN BUFFETT IS ANTI-CATHOLIC



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an aspect of Warren Buffett's finances not ordinarily discussed:

Warren Buffett's comment that the rich should pay higher taxes, now enshrined by President Barack Obama as the "Buffett Rule," is drawing much applause. What is not being discussed is the billionaire's support for anti-Catholicism. First some background information.

Over several decades, Buffett has spent a fortune funding radical abortion organizations like NARAL and Planned Parenthood; he has lavishly given money to train a new generation of abortion physicians; he has spent millions to

help RU-486 (the abortion-inducing drug) to win FDA approval; and he gave his pro-abortion, population-control friends at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation nearly \$31 billion in 2006 for more of the same. There's nothing anti-Catholic about any of this, but when he intentionally seeks to subvert Catholicism by dishonestly funding pro-abortion organizations that have hijacked the Catholic name, that's another story.

To be specific, Buffett has given hundreds of millions over the years to anti-Catholic front groups like Catholics for Choice (formerly Catholics for a Free Choice) and its sister organization in Latin America, Catholics for the Right to Decide. In 2010, the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation alone gave \$759,822 to the former, and almost \$1.7 million to the latter. These letter-head organizations wouldn't exist if they depended on donations from members—they don't have any—they exist because of the likes of Warren Buffett.

If Buffett, or someone like him, were to throw millions upon millions funding Jews for Jesus, what would the Jewish community call him? Now you know why Warren Buffett has earned the tag anti-Catholic.

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## JAY LENO GOES BACK TO SEWER



In last night's monologue, Jay Leno commented on an auxiliary bishop from Los Angeles who recently stepped down after admitting he fathered two children. After explaining what happened, Leno said, "I thought bishops could only move diagonally. I didn't know they could move up and down." When making these

remarks, Leno gestured with his hands, waving them side to side, and then up and down.

Leno went on to say, "Isn't it amazing the bishop of L.A. confessed to fathering two children? But, hey, he didn't use birth control, so at least he followed the church rules. Ya gotta give him credit for that."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

There are those who will say, sure, Leno was tough on the bishop, but what do you expect from a late-night talk show host? After all, had there been no wrongdoing, there would have been no wise crack. This view is seriously mistaken.

The most serious cases of the sexual abuse of minors currently taking place are among Orthodox Jewish rabbis in Brooklyn, yet Leno would never tell a joke at their expense. The rate of HIV/AIDS among homosexuals is 50 times higher than in the rest of the population, yet Leno would never tell a joke at their expense. [Note: making such jokes would be equally offensive.] But if there is one wayward Catholic clergyman, it's not only acceptable to ridicule him, it's okay to mock the teachings of the Catholic Church.

What makes this so disturbing is Leno's sordid history: he has a long track record of bashing Catholicism. To read about this man's serial problems, click [here](#).

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# WHEN MEDIA BIAS IS SUBTLE



Catholic League president Bill Donohue points to some instances of bias in today's *New York Times*:

The reason I read the *New York Times* every day is because of its comprehensive coverage and tremendous influence on other media outlets. Editorially, at least on cultural issues, the positions of the *New York Times* are diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Catholic Church. They are entitled to their opinion. What bothers me are the subtleties of bias that creep in, as in today's edition.

In the "Arts, Briefly" section today, there is a story on how some of India's Sikhs are angry at Jay Leno for making a disrespectful joke about their religion. The piece begins by saying, "It's the rare Jay Leno joke that results in ruffled feathers in the United States." Really? I guess the reporter, Dave Itzkoff, never heard of one of Leno's endless stream of jokes painting all priests as predators. [By the way, Leno is so relentless in bashing priests that we prepared a report detailing his offenses from April 29, 1996 to February 4, 2010 and sent it to NBC executives.]

When someone dies who may have had a checkered past, it is not unusual for a news story to cite the comments of his adversaries. And while an obituary may quote a critic of the deceased, it is highly unusual to see the remarks of an official from an advocacy organization make that page. Yet in today's obituary on Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, Dennis Hevesi allows a spokesman from a notoriously anti-Catholic group, SNAP, to hammer the late archbishop. [We issued a report on SNAP last year demonstrating its open hostility to the Catholic Church.]



Finally, tens of thousands of Catholics, led by many bishops, turned out yesterday for the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. There was no story about it in the *New York Times*. Yet when a few dozen “Occupy Wall Street” protesters were camping out, the *Times* had plenty of room to cover them, pictures included. By the way, the *Washington Post* has a front-page story on the March for Life in its B section today.

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## PHILLY PROSECUTOR IS MALICIOUS



The Philadelphia Archdiocese was named an “unindicted co-conspirator” today by prosecutors in a case involving clergy sexual abuse. At the pretrial hearing, Assistant District Attorney Mark Cipolletti made accusations against a defrocked priest, Edward Avery, and the archdiocese. Cipolletti said “the archdiocese was supplying him [Avery] with an endless amount of victims.” Msgr. William Lynn will also face trial in March. He is charged with covering up incidents of sexual abuse for the archdiocese.

[The article by John P. Martin of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* is the source of the remarks attributed to the parties in this dispute.]

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

Attorney Thomas Bergstrom, who is representing Msgr. William Lynn, calls Assistant District Attorney Mark Cipolletti’s remarks “nutty.” He does so by citing the fact that all but one of the seven allegations made against Edward Avery were



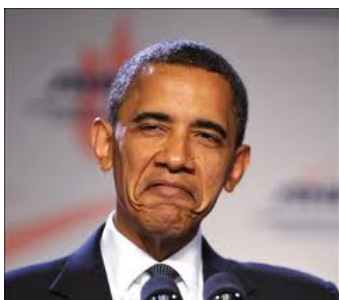
made after Lynn had left his post in the archdiocese where he was responsible for dealing with these cases. Bergstrom notes that the prosecutors are conceding this issue—they know that Lynn wasn't aware of these cases—yet they continue to hammer away.

It is too kind to say that Cipolletti is “nutty.” He’s malicious. Just think about what he is saying. We are to believe that “the archdiocese was *“supplying [Avery] with an endless amount of victims”* [my italic]. This boggles the mind. Was the Archdiocese of Philadelphia operating a human conveyor belt—lining the boys up single file before feeding them to predators? Or did archdiocesan officials follow the advice of therapists and allow for treated abusers to return to ministry, *just the way every other institution, religious and secular, did up until recently?*

In other words, was evil at work or bad judgment? Cipolletti says it’s the former. Let him prove it.

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## OPPOSITION TO HEALTHCARE MANDATE GROWS



The announcement on January 20 by Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius that religious non-profits will have to cover sterilization and contraceptive services, including some abortion-inducing drugs, is being met with growing rancor.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue speaks to this issue today:

Cardinal-designate Timothy Dolan, the Archbishop of New York,

responded to the Obama administration's edict by saying, "Never before has the federal government forced individuals and organizations to go into the marketplace and buy a product that violates their conscience."

Joining him in this assessment is an unlikely ally, namely the editorial board of the *Washington Post*. Today, the editorial on this subject says that "requiring a religiously affiliated employer to spend its own money in a way that violates its religious principles does not make an adequate accommodation for those deeply held views."

Michael Sean Winters at the liberal *National Catholic Reporter* was highly critical of the Obama edict; he even went so far as to say that Obama "lost my vote" as a result of this decision. Some prominent priests and nuns who initially supported Obamacare have also expressed their opposition to this ruling.

What's going on? Many of those who tend to side with abortion-rights advocates also hold to the very American principle of respecting conscience rights; when these issues collide, the latter proves decisive.

The Obama administration made a fatal flaw when it assumed that most people are not going to get worked up about healthcare plans that carry contraceptive coverage. If the plans were voluntarily adopted, the administration would be right. But the difference in this instance is that this service is being mandated by the federal government, allowing no exceptions for those who in good conscience cannot go along; the inclusion of abortifacients in the policy only deepens the problem.

There is a high price paid for arrogance in politics. Stay tuned—this issue isn't going to go away.

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# OBAMA'S CONTEMPT FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on today's announcement from the Obama administration that it is going forward with its original "Obamacare" policy that mandates coverage of sterilization and contraceptive services

in most healthcare plans:

Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius said today that aside from houses of worship, all other religious agencies and organizations will be required to provide sterilization and contraceptive services, including abortifacients, in their employee healthcare plans; none will be allowed to charge co-pays or deductibles. The policy goes into effect in August 2013 for these entities; all others will be required to provide these services in August 2012.

Sebelius explained how her directive applies to non-church religious entities such as Catholic hospitals and universities: "Employers wishing to take advantage of the additional year must certify that they qualify for the delayed implementation. This additional year will allow these organizations more time and flexibility to adapt to this new rule." She also said, "I believe this proposal strikes the appropriate balance between religious freedom and increasing access to important preventive services."

The language is Orwellian. With stunning magnanimity, Sebelius tells Catholic non-profits that they can take advantage of their one-year reprieve as long as they seek the blessings of

the federal government. If they pass muster with the bureaucrats, then they have time to figure out how they can prostitute their religiously ground convictions, or prepare for bankruptcy. To top things off, after shoving the radical secular agenda down the throat of Catholics—and other people of faith who share their concerns—Sebelius congratulates the Obama administration for striking a “balance” between religious liberty and Obamacare. But, of course, no balance was struck: the edict grants nothing to those who believe in religious liberty, and she knows it.

That this dictatorial edict is being announced in an election year indicates both contempt for the First Amendment and plain stupidity.

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## POPE'S OBLIQUE SHOT AT OBAMA

☒ Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on today's address [to read it click [here](#)] by Pope Benedict XVI to U.S. Bishops on their “Ad Limina” visit:

Without explicitly naming President Barack Obama, Pope Benedict XVI made it clear today that he sees the administration as a threat to religious liberty. The pope spoke eloquently on the role that religious freedom has played since the founding of America, and of the need for Catholics to follow the natural law. But he also said, “The legitimate separation of Church and State cannot be taken to mean that the Church must be silent on certain issues.” Specifically, he called attention to the “grave threats to the Church's public moral witness presented by a radical secularism which finds increasing expression in the political and cultural spheres.”

How do we know that the pope was addressing the Obama

administration when he cited the threats emanating from the political sphere? Speaking of his discussions with U.S. bishops, the Holy Father said: "Many of you have pointed out that concerted efforts have been made to deny the right of conscientious objection on the part of Catholic individuals and institutions with regard to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices. Others have spoken to me of a worrying tendency to reduce religious freedom to mere freedom of worship without guarantees of respect for freedom of conscience."

Pope Benedict XVI is obviously aware of the public pronouncements of people such as Cardinal-designate Timothy Dolan, Bishop William Lori, and others. They have rightfully objected to the Obamacare provisions that would mandate Catholic institutions to provide sterilization and contraceptive services (including abortifacients) without any realistic religious exemption, and of the decision to deny funding to a Catholic agency that combats human trafficking simply because the Church opposes abortion. The term "freedom of worship," which was coined to distinguish it from "freedom of religion," expresses a highly privatized understanding of religious liberty that does not embrace the public expression of religion. It is the preferred term of President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.