



# CATHOLIC LEAGUE

*For Religious  
and  
Civil Rights*

September 7, 2017

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Hon. Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On September 6, as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, you questioned University of Notre Dame Law School professor Amy Coney Barrett about her suitability to sit on the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals. You are entitled, and indeed expected, to thoroughly grill all prospective members of the federal bench. But you crossed the line when you drilled down on her Catholicity.

"When you read your speeches," you told her, "the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you. And that's of concern when you come to big issues that large numbers of people have fought for for years in this country."

No one was fooled by your question. Why didn't you come right out and ask her if she takes her judicial cues from the Vatican? That would have been more honest.

I hasten to note that this is not the first time you have gone down this road. In 2005, you showed your true colors when you questioned John Roberts about his suitability to sit on the Supreme Court: you specifically asked him if he shared President John F. Kennedy's 1960 convictions about not mixing church and state.

Do you, as a matter of course, probe the propriety of having a person of deep faith on the court who is not Catholic? If so, please share that information with me. If not, try treating Catholics as equals.

I would appreciate a response to the serious issues I have raised. What you did comes perilously close to applying a religious test to professor Barrett, and that is explicitly unconstitutional.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'William A. Donohue'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, prominent 'W' and 'D'.

William A. Donohue, Ph.D  
President