

As a follow up to Fr. Walden's column last week about bills in the New York State Legislature that will affect the church, below is a summary of two bills. Please support the Lopez/Kruger Bill and oppose the Markey/Duane Bill. Please take the time to read the information. Then contact Assemblyman Michael Fitzpatrick to voice your support of the Lopez Bill and opposition to the Markey Bill. Contact Senator John Flanagan to voice your support of the Kruger Bill and opposition to the Duane Bill. Together our voices will make a difference for who we are and what we do as the Catholic Church. Contact information for Assemblyman Fitzpatrick and Senator Flanagan is as follows:

Assemblyman Michael Fitzpatrick
 50 Route 111, Suite 202
 Smithtown, NY 11787
 631-724-2929

Senator John J. Flanagan
 260 Middle Country Road, Suite 203
 Smithtown, NY 11787
 631-361-2154

Statute Of Limitations: Proposed Changes In The Law That Will Affect The Church

There are two bills (the Lopez/Kruger bill and the Markey/Duane bill) currently being considered by the New York State Legislature that would amend the statute of limitations for bringing lawsuits based on an allegation of sexual abuse.

A statute of limitations is the time period within which a suit may be instituted in a court of law.

The Lopez/Kruger bill prospectively extends the statute of limitations in the future for certain sex crimes committed against minors and amends the law to provide an equal opportunity for all victims to bring a claim within the extended statute of limitations period against businesses, not-for-profits, religious organizations and municipal entities. The Markey/Duane bill, extends the statute of limitations into the past by allowing, for a one-year period, any abuse-related suit to be brought no matter how old the allegations. The Markey/Duane bill also targets the Church and other private institutions and does nothing to allow victims of abuse by public institutions (like the public schools) to bring suits during the special one-year period.

In short, unlike the Markey/Duane bill, the Lopez/Kruger bill supports the rights of victims without doing grave injustice to the Church and other private institutions.

We urge you to support laws to protect your children and grandchildren from abuse. But reopening statutes of limitations for only one class of victims is not just or equitable and will only serve to punish today's Catholic parishioners, schoolchildren and those in need of the services provided through the Church's network of charitable programs and organizations.

<u>Why we oppose the Markey/Duane Bill</u>	<u>Why we support the Lopez/Kruger Bill</u>
- Focuses on the past	- Focuses on the future
- Applies only to private nonprofits, businesses	- Applies to all groups evenly (schools, hospitals, churches, businesses)
- Does nothing to protect children now	- Protects children now where they spend most of their time – public schools
- Retroactively changes the rules rejecting a principle of American jurisprudence, the statute of limitations	- Is fair to alleged victims and potential plaintiffs, balancing issues of fairness with justice
- Creates two classes of victim, based on where perpetrator worked or abuse occurred	- Applies equally and fairly to all victims and all institutions

To contact your New York State Assemblyperson and Senators to voice opposition to the Markey/Duane bill and support of the Lopez/Kruger bill, visit [www. protectnychildren.com](http://www.protectnychildren.com).



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