



CONNECTICUT CATHOLIC PUBLIC AFFAIRS CONFERENCE, INC.  
134 FARMINGTON AVENUE  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06105-3784

MICHAEL C. CULHANE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEACON DAVID W. REYNOLDS  
LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

April 10/11, 2010

Dear Parishioners and Friends:

As the Bishops of the Catholic family of the State of Connecticut, we are requesting your immediate attention to House Bill 5473 which may be voted on in the General Assembly during the next week or two.

This bill would retroactively eliminate the statute of limitations for civil lawsuits related to allegations of child sexual abuse. Connecticut already has the longest retroactive statute in the United States – 30 years past the age of 18. Over the past several years in states that have even temporarily eliminated the statutes, it has caused the bankruptcy of at least seven dioceses. House Bill 5473 would make Connecticut the only State without a statute of limitations. This bill would put all Church institutions, including your parish, at risk.

The nature of bankruptcy litigation puts all assets at risk, even if your parish has had no past incidents, reports or allegations of child abuse. That is why it is important for you to join other Catholics across Connecticut in opposing this legislation.

And this is not simply about bankruptcy or the loss of property. Ultimately the legislation would undermine the mission of the Catholic Church in Connecticut, threatening our parishes, our schools, and our Catholic Charities.

As you know, in addition to instituting a zero tolerance policy, we have compassionately reached out to victims and their families through counseling, prayerful apology and considerable financial settlements. We have also created one of the most effective child protection programs in the country, and we are constantly reviewing it for improvement. We have trained thousands of children and adults under our Safe Environments Program.

It is important to understand that the claims which could be made under House Bill 5473 might be 50, 60, 70 years old or older. Most often, these claims would be driven by a small number of trial lawyers hoping to profit from these cases. They would be difficult to defend because key individuals are deceased, memories have faded, and documents and other evidence have been lost.

How did this happen, you may ask? The latest attempt to change the statute of limitations is tied to a now deceased physician at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford. While this legislation is aimed directly at this hospital, it also targets the Catholic Church across the state and has potentially disastrous fallout for all of us.

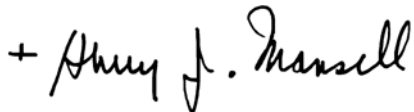
Page Two  
April 10/11, 2010

The bottom line is that this is terrible public policy, discriminatory by its nature, and a huge threat to us all. Most importantly, it does nothing to protect the state's children because it delays reporting. **We must stop this bill now.**

You will remember the now infamous Senate Bill 1098 last year, which was an attempt to restructure the governance of the Catholic Church. Your immediate and aggressive action against the bill helped defeat it.

Once again, it is time to act and do so decisively. We are providing contact information for your representatives with this letter. **Please take action today!** This is our Church, your Church, and we love and cherish it. Please contact your State Senator and State Representative now and express your strong opposition to House Bill 5473 as soon as possible.

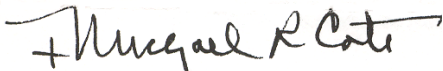
Thank you as always and may you and your families be blessed every day.



The Most Reverend Henry J. Mansell  
Archdiocese of Hartford



The Most Reverend William E. Lori  
Diocese of Bridgeport



The Most Reverend Michael R. Cote  
Diocese of Norwich

**PLEASE CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TODAY!!!**

Your Senator/Representative are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Senate Democrats	800-842-1420
House Democrats	800-842-8267
Senate Republicans	800-842-1421
House Republicans	800-842-1423

For further information on House Bill 5473, please refer to our website at [www.ctcatholic.org](http://www.ctcatholic.org)