

## **Humanist Group Expresses Support for Investigation into Catholic Church Child Sex Abuse**

*For Immediate Release*

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(Washington, DC, Nov. 16, 2015)--The American Humanist Association attended a press conference today announcing the proposal for a commission to investigate child sex abuse within the Catholic Church, as well as within sports and other public and private institutions. The American Humanist Association, with Catholic Whistleblowers and other organizations, calls upon President Obama and the U.S. government to address the epidemic of child abuse.

The American Humanist Association has long called for action on this issue. In 2010, the American Humanist Association demanded an investigation into the Catholic Church's sex abuse scandal after evidence came to light that [Pope Benedict refused to defrock an American priest](#) who had sexually abused two boys. The American Humanist Association's [2015 Resolution Affirming Human Rights for All](#) states that "sexuality is a component of human personality and lives important from an evolutionary perspective that has significant biological and emotional consequences." As such, the American Humanist Association condemns the sexual abuse of children as a violation of human rights.

"The children who have been abused by Catholic priests deserve justice and assurances should be put in place that prevent the continuation of abuse," said Roy Speckhardt, executive director of the American Humanist Association. "Religious institutions cannot be allowed to remain above the law."

Matthew Bulger, the AHA's lobbyist, said at the press conference that "this issue transcends religious, political, and philosophical differences. The right of a child to grow up free from abuse, be it from a stranger, family member, religious official, or anyone else, requires not only spoken advocacy against such crimes, but the creation by the government of a national commission to investigate the sexual abuse of children in the United States."

With the American Humanist Association, other coalition members include: Catholic Whistleblowers; Child Friendly Faith Program; Child Justice, Inc.; Foundation to Abolish Child Sex Abuse; Foundation for Survivors of Abuse; Horace Mann Action Coalition; MaleSurvivor; National Black Church Initiative; National Center for Victims of Crime; Peaceful Hearts Foundation; Road to Recovery; SNAP; Turning Point; and Voice Today.

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*Founded in 1941 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., the [American Humanist Association](#) (AHA) works to protect the rights of humanists, atheists, and other nontheistic Americans. The AHA advances the ethical and life-affirming philosophy of humanism, which—without beliefs in any gods or other supernatural forces—encourages individuals to live informed and meaningful lives that aspire to the greater good of humanity.*