



# Parents for Megan's Law and the Crime Victim's Center

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## Press Release

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## PFML/CVC Strongly Supports A.2596 Markey Legislation

"Statutes of limitations are put into place in an attempt to insure fairness. The rationale is that over time memories allegedly fade, evidence can be lost or disappear, and that people or organizations want to move on without the threat of legal interference from the past. In certain types of cases this logic may be applicable, but not in the case of sexual victimization and more specifically, the sexual victimization of children. There is no limitation on the lifelong emotional suffering and life altering consequences a child victim endures. Memories of childhood sexual victimization manifest themselves in adolescence and adulthood in the forms of increased rates of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, dissociative disorders and suicidal ideation. Not only do victims suffer a devastating lifelong emotional cost, there is also a financial burden that society must bear. Over ten years ago, the US Department of Justice estimated that rape and the sexual abuse of children cost \$1.5 billion in medical expenses and \$23 billion total annually to US victims.

Persons in position of authority in the Catholic Church conspired to facilitate the largest cover-up of the sexual victimization of children in the history of our nation, and should not be able to escape responsibility by hiding behind a statute of limitations, nor should victims be denied justice because of it.

If signed into law, the Markey legislation will, for the first time in New York State, demonstrate to one of the most powerful and richest organizations that they, among others, are not above the law. They must be accountable to the many victims whose lives they chose to significantly damage, through calculated actions designed to shield their reputation and protect their assets. Although the financial ramifications of this proposed law may be distasteful to the Catholic Church, and other organizations that chose not to protect the innocent, a one year window for the filing of civil actions, is at the very least, fair and just. We strongly support and encourage the passage of Assemblywoman Markey's legislation."

Laura A. Ahearn, L.M.S.W.  
Executive Director  
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