



**CATHOLIC  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
PROJECT**

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February 13, 2024

Attorney General Bob Ferguson  
Office of the Attorney General  
1125 Washington St SE  
PO Box 40100  
Olympia, WA

Subject: Support and Recommendations for Investigation of Clergy Sexual Abuse Cases

Dear Attorney General Ferguson,

As survivors of clergy sexual abuse and anti-abuse advocates from Washington State, we are writing to you to express our appreciation and support for your recent actions in investigating the decades-long and systematic abuse of children within the Catholic Church. We commend your dedication to uncovering the truth behind these heinous crimes and your commitment to ensuring religious liberty for all children in our state by protecting them from abuse.

It is our knowledge and belief that subpoenas were issued to the three Catholic dioceses of Washington State last August, pursuant to the Washington State Charitable Trust Act. We understand that these subpoenas were issued as part of your office's duty to facilitate the public supervision of charitable trusts. We appreciate your efforts to compel the production of abuse-related documents from Catholic dioceses. This evidence is indispensable to any investigation into patterns and practices that have facilitated widespread sexual abuse of children in Washington State.

In addition to this crucial first step, we urge you to take further action to address clergy sexual abuse in our state. Specifically, we request the following:

1. Immediate establishment of a confidential hotline and online reporting system, similar to those implemented in other statewide investigations. This will provide a secure platform for victims, witnesses, and whistleblowers to report abuse and cover-up within faith-based organizations.

2. In collaboration with local district attorneys, the vigorous pursuit of criminal prosecutions based on evidence uncovered during your investigation. It is imperative that those responsible for perpetrating and enabling these crimes are held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.
3. Verification of the accuracy and completeness of the lists of clergy offenders published on the diocese and religious order websites. It is essential that survivors and the public have access to truthful information regarding known abusers within these institutions.
4. Issuance of a comprehensive final report to the citizens of Washington State, detailing your findings and recommendations. Transparency is crucial in addressing clergy sexual abuse, and a detailed report will help to inform the public and guide future actions to prevent further harm.

We believe that anyone in our state who has been a victim of, witnessed, or suspects abuse should feel encouraged to come forward and report to your office, regardless of when the abuse occurred. It is essential that all reports are treated with confidentiality and sensitivity as you continue your investigation.

We thank you for your attention to this critical issue and stand ready to support your efforts in any way possible.

Sincerely,

**Timothy A. Law**  
Founding Member  
**Catholic Accountability Project**  
Board Member  
**Ending Clergy Abuse (ECA)**

**Mary Dispenza**  
Founding Member  
**Catholic Accountability Project**  
Northwest Director  
**Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP)**