

March 11, 2009  
Mayor April Capone Almon  
Town of East Haven

In response to the many questions I have been asked about the recent discussion of the proposed changes to laws governing the Roman Catholic Church. I would like to take this opportunity to respond:

Like most people in the state I was surprised to learn that there is a State law which dictates how Roman Catholic Parishes must be organized. Apparently this law has been on the books for 150 years and has been rewritten many times by the state legislature, most recently in the 1960's. A fundamental tenet of our country is the separation of church and state, therefore, laws that interfere with the operation of any religious entity should be deemed unconstitutional.

I have included a copy of the existing state law that sets specific rules for the running of Roman Catholic Parishes:

### **Current State Law Re:**

#### ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Sec. 33-279. Organization as corporation.** A corporation may be organized in connection with any Roman Catholic Church or congregation in this state, by filing in the office of the Secretary of the State a certificate signed by the archbishop or bishop and the vicar-general of the archdiocese or of the diocese in which such congregation is located and the pastor and two laymen belonging to such congregation, stating that they have so organized for the purposes hereinafter mentioned. Such archbishop or bishop, vicar-general and pastor of such congregation and, in case of the death or other disability of the archbishop or bishop, the administrator of the archdiocese or diocese for the time being, the chancellor of the archdiocese or diocese and the pastor of such congregation shall be members, ex officio, of such corporation, and, upon their death, resignation, removal or preferment, their successors in office shall become such members in their stead. The two lay members shall be appointed annually, in writing, during the month of January from the lay members of the congregation by a majority of the ex-officio members of the corporation; and three members of the corporation, of whom one shall be a layman, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Mayor April Capone Almon  
Town of East Haven, Connecticut  
250 Main Street  
East Haven, CT 06512  
203-468-3205  
[www.TownofEastHavenCT.org](http://www.TownofEastHavenCT.org)