



Statement of the Diocese of Buffalo on the Proposal for Prepackaged Rapid Chapter 11 Filings

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Buffalo remains committed to reaching a comprehensive and fair resolution of all historical abuse claims through its ongoing Chapter 11 process. After years of negotiations, the Diocese and its creditors' committee reached agreement on a proposed settlement in which the Diocese, its parishes, and Catholic affiliate organizations—collectively referred to as the “Catholic Family”—would contribute \$150 million to a settlement trust, in addition to insurer contributions that together will total more than \$300 million in restitution compensation for sexual abuse survivors.

The joint reorganization plan filed with the Bankruptcy Court in October 2025 is designed to ensure that survivors receive compensation through this trust while providing parishes and Catholic affiliate organizations with legal certainty through a court-approved channeling injunction that directs all abuse claims to the trust.

Following a recent court ruling requiring individual survivors to affirmatively “opt in” to that injunction, the Diocese and the creditors' committee have asked the court to reconsider and instead allow an “opt-out” process, which would apply the injunction unless a survivor expressly objects. The Diocese believes this approach would best ensure the effectiveness of the settlement for all claimants and the stability of the broader Catholic community going forward.

As part of those court filings, the creditors' committee has referenced a procedural option used in other jurisdictions that could allow parishes to pursue expedited, prepackaged Chapter 11 filings if necessary to implement a global settlement. These filings—used in restructurings of other dioceses—can provide legal resolution efficiently once settlement terms have been confirmed.

At this time, no decision has been made to pursue bankruptcy filings for parishes or Catholic affiliate organizations. The Diocese continues to believe the most effective and expedited path forward is court approval of the current settlement framework and a reversal of Judge Bucki's “opt-in” ruling to allow for the “opt-out” methodology—supported by both the Diocese and the creditors' committee—which would provide meaningful compensation to survivors while resolving claims in a comprehensive and equitable manner.

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