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## **Diocese Urges Rejection of Suit**

Interviews, Statute of Limitations Cited in Response to Abuse Claim

By Michele Morgan Bolton  
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ALBANY -- The Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany wants a Massachusetts judge to dismiss claims that Bishop Howard Hubbard knew an accused pedophile priest was sexually abusing young boys in the 1980s but did nothing about it.

The move by Hubbard's lawyers follows Suffolk County Superior Court Justice Joseph M. Walker III's rejection of two requests to have the case moved to New York, where most of the alleged abuse took place.

The case also names former priest Dozia Wilson.

Joe Woodward, a married father of six, claims he was sexually abused by Wilson over five years in both states -- beginning at age 12.

He has claimed that repressed memories began to surface only recently.

But court papers filed by the diocese not only make the familiar claim that statutes of limitations are long expired in both states, they also call Woodward's truthfulness into question.

The diocese's documents cite published interviews in which the now-devout Baptist said both his first wife and current wife knew of the abuse. The legal filings also contend that "if he believed that going public with his story could have made a difference and stopped future abuse, he would have done it long ago."

"We believe there are certain justifications for dismissing the complaint," diocesan spokesman Kenneth Goldfarb said Monday. "This is just the next step in the process."

Attorney John Aretakis, who represents Woodward and dozens of other alleged abuse victims, disagreed: "Bishop Hubbard has control over tens of millions of dollars and he is hell-bent on spending a huge amount of money on his lawyers to delay this case. He's trying to bankrupt me with my time, money and expenses so he will never have to go to court."

"He also knows the day he gets put under oath by me, his house of cards will crumble," Aretakis said.

Woodward's \$5 million court action accuses Hubbard and former Boston Archbishop Bernard Law of protecting Wilson, now of Dobb's Ferry, by moving him quietly from parish to parish, and state to state, as complaints about his sexually inappropriate behavior arose.

Diocesan court papers, however, say Woodward has not accused the diocese or Hubbard of personally knowing about his trips with Wilson, or sanctioning them.

He has, instead, accused them of negligent hiring, retention, direction and supervision.

Woodward was 37 when he filed the claim, court papers said. In both states, legal papers noted that such a claim of sex abuse would have had to have been filed within three years of his 18th birthday.

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