

# Nates Mission: AG Kaul downgrades clergy abuse “investigation” to review

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On Monday night, WBAY [aired an exclusive interview](#) with Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul where he refused to refer to his clergy and faith leader abuse initiative as an “investigation” – opting for the term review instead.

In a [new video](#), Nate’s Mission has compiled reporting and direct quotes from the Attorney General that unmistakably identify the DOJ’s efforts as an investigation.

This reversal in language demonstrates Kaul’s unwillingness to exercise the legal authority that he and the five district attorneys supporting his “investigation” have under Wisconsin law to subpoena Church documents and evidence and compel testimony from Church officials involved in the institutional concealment of rape and sexual abuse of children.

This is contrary to statements Kaul made last year when he expressed hope that Wisconsin’s Catholic dioceses and religious orders would “[cooperate with the investigation](#)” and urged survivors to report abuse saying, “there has never been a statewide independent investigation of the issue of clergy and faith leader abuse in Wisconsin” like the one his office had opened. On their own website, [www.supportsurvivors.widoj.gov](http://www.supportsurvivors.widoj.gov), the DOJ [advertises a list of articles](#) that classify their efforts as an investigation.

After taking credit for having undertaken a “historic” and “sweeping investigation,” Kaul’s DOJ took several steps to assure Church officials and their corporate lawyers that they were not under investigation.

- When the [Milwaukee Archdiocese publicly refused to cooperate](#) with the DOJ by turning over abuse documents, Kaul's office declined to challenge them, [citing their "aggressive attorneys" and the "politically-charged Supreme Court in the state"](#)
- After Church attorneys demanded the DOJ hand over documents obtained by Church whistleblowers, the DOJ complied by [giving them documents](#) containing evidence of potential criminal conduct, including fraud.
- Despite having assured survivors that they had the resources available to conduct an investigation, their Victim Service Specialist [emailed a survivor](#) saying "investigating is too strong of a word" and that "the reality is \$\$\$."

For 30 years, survivors begged the Wisconsin DOJ to open a statewide investigation into clergy abuse and coverup by Church officials. The Attorney General solemnly promised survivors he would do this, calling his initiative an "investigation," asking for their blessing, and inviting them to stand with him at the announcement where he called it an "investigation."

Kaul owes survivors an explanation.