

# Mass. guarantee fund cited in diocese abuse suit delay

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SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP) — The Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield has filed a motion to delay at least five clergy sexual abuse suits, claiming the insurance company providing coverage in alleged sex abuse cases is being liquidated.

The order of liquidation for The Home Insurance Co. provides for a six-month stay on pending litigation, but shouldn't affect any possible settlement agreements, The Republican of Springfield quoted a diocesan lawyer. The diocese's motion filed in Hampden Superior Court was taken under advisement.

The liquidation triggered the Massachusetts Insurers Insolvency Fund, an industry-assessed guarantee fund, to assume some of Home Insurance's legal responsibilities.

"In connection with any mediation, the guarantee fund would be a party at the negotiating table," attorney lawyer Edward J. McDonough Jr. told the newspaper. He said the stay would allow for a time-out in order to take an inventory of what's happening. □