

Teen Convert's Parents Back Out of Agreement

✖ The parents of teen convert Rifqa Bary have withdrawn their consent to allow their daughter to remain in foster care, possibly until she turns 18 in August, and seek to resolve their conflict through counseling.

Mohamed and Aysha Bary filed a motion in Franklin County Juvenile Court Thursday, asking that the Jan. 19 agreement be thrown out "because of misrepresentation and fraudulent inducement," the *Columbus Post-Dispatch* reported.

Rifqa Bary, 17, ran away to Florida in July, saying her Muslim parents threatened to harm her for converting to Christianity. She spent nearly three weeks with Florida pastors Blake and Beverly Lorenz before being placed in Florida foster care. She was transferred to Franklin County Children Services in Ohio in November.

According to the motion filed by their attorney, Omar Tarazi, the couple say their daughter is being exploited by Christian supporters and take issue with the fact that she has been allowed to talk with the Lorenzes, who have been under investigation for their role in helping the teen get to Florida. They say the contact may hinder changes for reunification the counseling was meant to promote.

In the filing, the couple also objects to her being allowed to attend “the very church that targeted her in the first place,” though the congregation is not named.

The *Post-Dispatch* reported that Bary’s parents also object to their daughter’s attorney sending a “happy birthday, Daddy” card to Blake Lorenz on Rifqa Bary’s behalf.

A Christian source close to the teen said Rifqa Bary has been approached about a book deal, a move he called “downright disgusting.” In an email update to supporters Jamal Jivanjee said Rifqa Bary is “in the fight of her life” and “needs to be defended not exploited.”

According to Thursday’s court filing, the teen has not talked with her parents yet. Because of a gag order, none of the parties nor their attorneys can comment on the case.

A hearing is scheduled for Feb. 16.