

Federal Judge Blocks Mandate for 10 Commandments

A federal judge ruled on Tuesday that a Louisiana statute mandating the display of the Ten Commandments in all public school classrooms is unconstitutional. U.S. District Judge John deGravelles asserted that the law contradicted established U.S. Supreme Court rulings and infringed upon the religious freedoms of individuals who oppose such displays.

Judge deGravelles further noted that the law imposed a coercive influence, as students are required to attend school for at least 177 days each year, potentially pressuring them to conform to the state-endorsed religious text.

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“We strongly disagree with the court’s decision and will immediately appeal, as H.B. 71’s implementation deadline is approaching on January 1, 2025,” said Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill in a statement reacting to the ruling.

This law made Louisiana the only state in the country to require the Ten Commandments displays when Governor Jeff Landry, a Republican, enacted it on June 19. In response, nine families—including several religious leaders—filed a lawsuit just five days later in federal court in Baton Rouge, the state’s capital, seeking to block the law.

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The judge, who was appointed by Democratic President Barack Obama, put the law’s future in question, as Louisiana may consider an appeal to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals,

which is often regarded as one of the most conservative federal appellate courts in the United States.

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