

Judge Roy Moore Likely Faces September Trial

In what Liberty Counsel founder and CEO Mat Staver billed a “politically motivated fiasco,” the Alabama Court of the Judiciary concluded its hearing with Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore and the state’s Judicial Inquiry Commission without taking action. While it is entirely possible the COJ could rule in Moore’s favor later this week, it seems more likely the embattled Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice will face a one-day trial next month to determine if he should be removed from office for a second time in 13 years. A tentative trial date has been set for Sept. 28.

The hearing before the COJ lasted about an hour and featured statements from both Staver—on Moore’s behalf—and John Carroll, who represented the JIC. Carroll is the former legal director for the Southern Poverty Law Center, which brought the complaint against Moore. Both sides were seeking summary judgment from the COJ. Moore was asking the court to dismiss the “baseless” ethics charges filed against him, while the JIC was seeking Moore’s immediate removal from office for what it says are violations of the state’s judicial canons of ethics. The hearing, however, concluded without any action taken. Afterward, Staver and Moore spoke to the media and supporters who had amassed outside the Alabama Supreme Court building.

Staver noted the COJ heard two other cases ahead of Moore’s. In one, a probate judge was accused of sending inappropriate pictures of himself to another person, while in the other, a probate judge was accused of handling an estate in which his sister was the proposed beneficiary.

Staver noted that in neither case, the JIC was demanding the judges be removed from office.

Both sides agree the case stems from a Jan. 6 order issued by Moore to the state's probate judges in which he stated that an earlier Alabama Supreme Court order prohibiting them from issuing same-sex "marriage" licenses was still in force. Moore said he was simply obeying the law, while the JIC says he was ordering probate courts to disobey the U.S. Supreme Court.

"In law, there's something that says, 'If you've got the law, argue the law. If you've got the facts, argue the facts. If you don't have neither one, argue how you feel,'" Moore said after the hearing. "That's basically what the JIC has done and the SPLC—the Southern Poverty Law Center—whose body of business is just around the corner here. They're the ones that hired the prosecutor. They're the ones that brought the case for the second time. They don't want anyone opposing any agenda of the homosexual movement. That's what they don't want

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"They say I urged the probate courts to disregard the federal courts. There is nothing in that administrative order that says that. Nothing. In fact, I said I'm not at liberty to give that guidance. It's the Alabama Supreme Court that gives you guidance. Furthermore, I addressed the confusion that was caused by the delay in the court's ruling. I said until the Alabama Supreme Court rules, this order remains in full force and effect. That is law."

[Click here to see the post-hearing press conference.](#)