

Pastor Sues New York State Over House of Worship Gun Ban

Read Time: 3 Minutes 16 Seconds

A pastor is suing New York State over a law prohibiting firearms at houses of worship, warning the government's provisions put his church at risk and hamper Second Amendment rights.

Michael Spencer, pastor of His Tabernacle Family Church, a Christian church in Horseheads, New York, argues the law unconstitutionally restricts churches' Second Amendment rights while still allowing businesses to decide for themselves whether a firearm is permitted on their property.

Spencer is hoping to see a court overturn these gun regulations, citing the impact on his church's security ministry, which can no longer carry weapons to protect the property.

Past threats and concerns have left the preacher and his church feeling vulnerable.

"One of the challenges that we have is that we're on television now," Spencer said, noting the large size of his church. "When somebody has—whether it be a psychological issue or a God-hating issue—we're probably the first ones [they go after]."

The preacher said he and his late wife not long ago received a message from someone who threatened to shoot them in the head. Other similar incidents have unfolded over the years.

But Spencer said his biggest concern is the parishioners—and especially the children—who worship at the church.

"We have 100 to 160 children every single week at this

church,” he said. “And you know, why in the world would we want to compromise the opportunity and ability ... to protect the body of Christ against [threats], whether they be lunatic, whether they be demon-possessed, whether they just be individuals that are God-haters?”

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