

When it Comes to Christian Rights, DNC Chair Talks Out Both Sides of Her Mouth

In a one-on-one sit down interview with The Brody File, Democratic National Committee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz says that churches have far greater religious liberty rights than those of private business owners. As you may know, just recently Christian business owners Aaron and Melissa Klein were ordered to pay a lesbian couple more than 100,000 dollars because they wouldn't bake a cake for their same-sex wedding. The DNC Chairwoman says a distinction must be made between churches and private citizens running a business. "If you're a religiously affiliated organization then you have wider latitude in terms of the constitution and the protections that the first amendment provides... "I think Americans make a distinction between protecting the first amendment rights of a religious organizations or religiously affiliated organizations and being able to discriminate, broadly, simply because of one individual who owns a business and their own values and their being able to impose those values on either their employers or their customers."

Watch the full clip below along with a full transcription. The Brody File will be moving other clips from the interview early next week. The DNC Chairwoman will also be featured in our extended conversation on next week's Brody File show.

It's an interesting distinction the DNC Chairwoman presents. Some conservatives (possible most conservatives) may see these comments as tantamount to saying that an individual person's right to religious liberty does not trump discrimination policies that are written into law. Indeed, this is the future debate America is about to have.

David Brody: The gay marriage question settled by the supreme court 5 to 4 but the religious liberty issue is clearly out there and I want you to speak to, if not Christians, Independents, American citizens, about what you would say, what the DNC would say to folks that are concerned about some of the religious liberty infringements potentially coming. We've seen obviously the Klein's, for example, in Oregon, this couple, this Christian couple who was fined, or has to pay, \$135,000 to a lesbian couple and now they're out of business. So, I mean, this is tangible. It's real in people's lives. What do you say to folks that are concerned with the religious liberty issue?

Debbie Wasserman-Schultz: "You shouldn't be able to turn people away based on who they are. It's important that no matter who you are, who you love, what the color of your skin is, what your national origin is, we're a nation of laws. Yes the marriage equality decision is settled. Love is love and now everyone in America enjoys the protection of the United States Constitution when it comes to who they choose to marry legally. That doesn't mean that churches and religious institutions have to conduct same sex marriages and it doesn't mean that religious institutions aren't able to practice their own values. But, in this country, we do not allow people to discriminate and that's I think is where the important distinction needs to be drawn.

David Brody: That's interesting, so just so I hear you, the distinction is more as it relates to the churches, groups,

Debbie Wasserman-Schultz: "Yes, legitimate religious institutions. And don't misunderstand my term legitimate. If you're a church and you're a church affiliated, and by church I mean like a synagogue, church, if you're a religiously affiliated organization then you have wider latitude in terms of the constitution and the protections that the first amendment provides. But, the law that Mike Pence in Indiana

tried to pass, which had a massive backlash, clearly would have gone far beyond that and allowed widespread discrimination across the board that Americans find abhorrent and unacceptable and that's why the backlash against that law was so strong. And then it was followed in Arkansas as well and Americans have made the distinction between protecting the first amendment rights for religious organizations or religiously affiliated organizations and being able to discriminate, broadly, simply because of one individual who owns a business and their own values and their being able to impose those values on either their employers or their customers."

David Brody *is the CBN News Chief Political Correspondent*