

'Ten Commandments Judge' Makes 2nd Run for Governor

Judge Roy Moore, who was ousted as chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court after refusing to remove a granite monument of the Ten Commandments from the state judicial building, announced Monday that he plans to run for governor of Alabama in 2010.

The bid marks the second time Moore has run for governor. During his kickoff speech the Republican candidate criticized the government's refusal to acknowledge God, a theme that some say may have cost him the 2006 gubernatorial race, the Associated Press (AP) reported. "Out of Washington comes a dangerous new message that we are not a Christian nation. Indeed, I refute that," Moore said.

Moore also called for economic and social reform, including criticizing federal power that "intrudes into private business, undermining our free enterprise system upon which we've always been based."

He also called for the creation of a commission to recommend changes in public education and opposition to gay marriage. "We cannot and will not allow activist judges from California and Massachusetts to push their own immoral opinions on the people of this state," he said.

Known as Alabama's "Ten Commandments judge," Moore became a hero for social conservatives when he was sued for displaying a handmade copy of the Ten Commandments in his courtroom in 1995 when he served on the civil court in Gadsden, Ala. The case ended largely unresolved due to legal technicalities, but the Ten Commandments stayed on Moore's courtroom wall.

In 2000, he was elected as the chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court by an overwhelming margin, but an Alabama ethics

panel voted him from office for his refusal to remove a granite monument of the Ten Commandments from the rotunda of the Alabama Judicial Building.

Moore ran for governor in 2006, but lost the Republican primary to incumbent Bob Riley. Although Riley can't run in 2010, Moore faces several GOP contenders, including a Greenville businessman Tim James, state Rep. Robert Bentley and former college Chancellor Bradley Byrne, the AP reported.

Democratic candidates include U.S. Rep. Artur Davis and state Agriculture Commissioner Ron Sparks.

Since losing his post as chief justice, Moore has led the Foundation for Moral Law, a Montgomery, Alabama-based organization that represents individuals involved in religious liberties cases and files amicus briefs in state and federal courts. The organization also conducts seminars about the importance of acknowledging God in law and government.

Moore's announcement came as other Christians within the GOP seemed to be gearing up for the 2012 presidential election.

In recent months, Iowa residents have received visits from Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, who won the GOP caucuses there in 2008, according to the AP. On Monday Nevada Sen. John Ensign was scheduled to participate in a conservative lecture series. He is to be followed by Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour and Huckabee, who will speak at a fundraiser for likely gubernatorial candidate Bob Vander Plaats.

Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, who are also thought to be considering presidential runs, have not visited Iowa since the election.