

After Atheist Threats, 'Soldier Kneeling Before a Cross' Removed

A statue of a soldier kneeling before a cross has been removed from a war memorial in North Carolina following a legal threat by a secular organization.

A U.S. Army veteran alongside the group Americans for the Separation of Church and State had filed a lawsuit in 2012 arguing that the display promoted Christianity over other faiths.

The decision to remove the memorial was opposed by many members of the local community, including veterans, who turned out to stage a protest.

Objections

King City Council voted 3-2 to approve a settlement, meaning that the city will not display the statue at King Central Park any more.

More than 100 residents and supporters objected to the decision and gathered at the site where veterans knelt in silent protest in front of a wooden cross.

David Dombrosky, a U.S. Air Force veteran said that he was surprised and moved by the response commenting: "It was so beautiful."

Protest

He was the first of several veterans who took turns to kneel while ministers spoke to those gathered.

Jessie Fletcher, a Marine wounded in Afghanistan, said, "as a

Christian, I would have considered those symbols as an honor, as I am sure most of the Christian families that have enjoyed the memorial have expressed.”

Last year a school in California caused similar controversy by banning all Christian material from its library.

Book Ban

Staff at the library were told to remove all books with a Christian message, authored by Christians or published by a Christian company.

Brad Dacus, from the Pacific Justice Institute (PJI), a religious advocacy group, said, “Libraries cannot engage in an open purging of books simply because they are of a Christian perspective.”