

Atheist Launches New Court Battle to Remove God From U.S. Currency

"In God We Trust" on U.S. currency violates "the constitutional rights" of the country's atheist population, and must be removed, according to a new lawsuit.

"The 'In G-d We Trust' phrase has continued to be a tool used to perpetuate favoritism for (Christian) Monotheism," the suit states, according to . "It has also continued to perpetuate anti-Atheistic bias."

Attorney and outspoken atheist Michael Newdow filed the suit this week in Ohio. However, he already lost a suit in California in 2010 over the same currency issue. Newdow's also lobbied to remove "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance.

The phrase "in God We Trust" was added to coins in the 1860s and paper notes in the 1960s.

"There is obviously no compelling government interest in having 'In God We Trust' on our money," Newdow writes in a blog post. "We did fine for the 75 years before the phrase was ever used at all, and continued to do fine for the subsequent 102 years before such inscriptions were made mandatory on every coin and currency bill. Similarly, the vast majority of nations manage to function without religious verbiage on their money."

"In God We Trust" became the national motto in the mid-19th century.

"Dear Sir: No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in

God should be declared on our national coins," Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase said at the time.