

Atheists Launch Vile Attack Against Mayor Who Honors God

A small town in Alabama that has been heavily criticized by anti-religion groups has received a boost from attorneys with the Pacific Justice Institute.

The City of Winfield, outside of Birmingham, came under fire after the mayor and city council passed a proclamation in December acknowledging the blessings of God and expressing a desire to seek divine guidance. Over the next several weeks, the city received blistering letters of condemnation from the American Civil Liberties Union and Freedom From Religion Foundation decrying the alleged violation of separation of church and state.

The FFRF letter was particularly harsh, suggesting that God was the mayor's "imaginary friend" and that, if God did exist, he probably did not care about the small Alabama town.

In response, PJI sent a letter to Mayor Randy Price late Friday, pointing out the proclamation's consistency both with recent cases and historic American traditions. The PJI letter noted the omission in either the ACLU or FFRF letters of failed attempts by those groups to mount similar legal challenges.

Within the last few years the FFRF lost a legal challenge to President Obama's continuation of the National Day of Prayer proclamation, and the ACLU lost a case where it had sued over Ohio's state motto, "With God all things are possible."

Court decisions in this area have also allowed local proclamations and resolutions to voice anti-religious sentiments. For instance, the federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld the right of San Francisco officials to issue scathing denunciations of religious groups and the

Catholic Church, in the name of free speech.

Brad Dacus, president of Pacific Justice Institute, commented, "The City of Winfield has chosen to continue a very long American tradition of acknowledging God and seeking divine guidance for continued blessings. The ACLU and FFRF may huff and puff, but they can't rewrite history. This proclamation does not compel or coerce anyone to do anything. As with any governmental action, not everyone is going to like it, but that doesn't make the proclamation unconstitutional."