

Blind 74-Year-Old Sidewalk Counselor Receives Miraculous Victory

Thomas More Society attorneys have achieved victory on behalf of pro-life sidewalk counselor David Schmidt. Schmidt, who volunteers with Kansas Coalition for Life, was acquitted of battery on July 25, 2017, by a Sedgwick County District Court jury.

The charges against Schmidt, who is 74 years old and largely blind, arose from a dispute over pro-life signage outside of Wichita's South Wind Women's Center. South Wind is well known for being the abortion facility previously run by notorious late-term abortionist George Tiller.

On the day in question, South Wind clinic security guard John Rayburn approached Schmidt's sign, which was on the ground near Schmidt in the public right of way and announced his intention to take it. Schmidt objected and physically resisted the guard's effort to remove the sign. Rayburn then had Schmidt charged with assault.

A judge ruled that the guard had no right to interfere with Schmidt's sign, and that Schmidt had the right to use reasonable physical force in defense of it. Subsequently, the Kansas jury found that Schmidt was reasonable in the amount of force he used.

Schmidt is one of many sidewalk counselors who volunteer their time to the Kansas Coalition for Life. A group of approximately 75 volunteers rotate throughout the week to provide a constant presence outside of South Wind's abortion center. They display coalition-owned signage as they pray and share life-affirming messages with the public. The volunteers' primary purpose is to inform and assist abortion-minded women

who are entering the clinic.

Thomas More Society attorney Martin Cannon defended Schmidt against the battery charges arising from his pro-life witness outside of the South Wind abortion facility. {eo}