

Christian Bakers Refuse to Stay Silent, Push Back on Persecution

Melissa and Aaron Klein are pushing back against the punishment imposed on them for simply living out their Christian faith.

The Kleins, former owners of Sweet Cakes by Melissa, are facing a \$135,000 fine from their home state of Oregon for declining to create a wedding cake for a same-sex ceremony in 2013.

After turning down the business, a complaint was filed before the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries. Last week, Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian finalized a fine of \$135,000 against the Kleins, ordering them to pay the lesbian couple for “emotional damages,” according to *Fox News* and *The Daily Signal*.

American Family Association brought the plight of the Kleins to the attention of its 1 million friends and supporters through an Action Alert yesterday.

“Aaron and Melissa Klein aren’t backing down from this calculated attack on their religious liberties and their freedom of speech,” said AFA President Tim Wildmon. “Now is the time for all Christians to stand together in support of the Kleins and their five children, letting them know that we support them, their stance for God’s definition of marriage and their bravery in the face of this incredible ordeal.”

Labor Commissioner Avakian also imposed a gag order on the couple, mandating that they “cease and desist” from speaking publicly about not wanting to bake cakes for same-sex weddings based on their Christian beliefs. Read more at *OneNewsNow*, the

AFA news service.

"This [decision] effectively strips us of all our First Amendment rights," the Kleins stated on their Facebook page. "According to the state of Oregon, we have neither freedom of religion nor freedom of speech."

The Kleins have requested a stay on the fine to delay the order so they can begin the appeals process. *Fox News* also reported that if they Kleins don't pay the fine by Monday, July 13, a lien could be imposed on their home. Melissa and Aaron also spoke during the American Pastors Network daily radio program, "Stand in the Gap Today," on Thursday.

AFA is encouraging supporters to sign a petition that will be sent to the Kleins, which states, "Thank you for remaining strong in your faith and for defending religious freedom for all Christians. Please know that I stand with you and will continue to pray for the Klein family and Sweet Cakes by Melissa. May God grant you wisdom, strength and peace as you go forward in your faithfulness to Him." AFA also shared the ContinuetoGive site that allows friends and supporters to help them financially.