

Judge Strikes Down Federal Tax Exemption for Clergy

A federal judge struck down a 1951 law that gives members of the clergy tax-free housing allowances.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation filed suit, saying the law unconstitutionally establishes religion.

The ruling said the exemption “provides a benefit to religious persons and no one else, even though doing so is not necessary to alleviate a special burden on religious exercise.”

The Southern Baptist Convention disagreed, saying that without the housing allowance, small congregations without parsonages might not be able to afford ministers.