

Why Arkansas Won't Let Toby Mac on Its School Buses

The music of Third Day, Chris Tomlin, Toby Mac and other popular Christian artists is no longer welcome on public school buses in Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

The school district recently directed a bus driver to refrain from playing a Christian radio station while transporting children, **television station KFSM first reported.**

The edict was handed down after a complaint was filed by the Freedom From Religion Foundation, a Wisconsin-based assortment of perpetually offended atheists, agnostics, free-thinkers and other radical rabble rousers.

The FFRF alleges they were contacted by a parent who objected to his child listening to contemporary Christian music on Bus 24.

The driver had been listening to **radio station KLRC – owned by John Brown University.**

“One of KLRC’s main purpose is to ‘share hope in Christ,’” FFRF attorney Patrick Elliott wrote in a letter to the district.

That sort of behavior causes great angst among the atheist crowd.

“The Siloam Springs School District must ensure that religious broadcasts are not being played to students utilizing district transportation,” he warned.

“Students on the bus are a captive audience and cannot avoid listening to broadcasts that the driver selects,” the FFRF attorney wrote. “Given the content of the programming and its proselytizing nature, young and impressionable students cannot

be forced to listen to such programs.”

So the school district capitulated and dutifully followed the will of the atheists, agnostics and freethinkers.

Supt. Ken Ramey told KFSM, “Under the establishment clause we’re supposed to be religiously neutral.”

The superintendent said the driver meant no harm.

“Just really good people who have no intent to promote religion, it’s just who they are,” he told the television station.

KLRC is one of the most popular radio stations in the region and one of the most renowned in the industry—winning both a Marconi and Dove award.

Beyond the music, the radio station is also known nationally for its community service efforts.

KLRC collects school supplies for needy children, helps kids deliver Valentines to home-bound senior citizens and they collect thousands of diapers to help disadvantaged moms.

And they also encourage their listeners to engage in random acts of kindness—a concept that is no doubt lost on the Freedom From Religion crowd.

“Our hope is for KLRC to continue to reach broad audiences with its quality music and for the station and its listeners to continue to bless our community through caring action,” university spokesman Lucas Roebuck told me.

But if militant, anti-Christian groups like the Freedom From Religion Foundation have their way, every Christian voice would be banished from the public marketplace.

Jerry Johnson, president of **National Religious Broadcasters**, rejected the FFRF’s assertions that listening to

Christian music on a school bus is a violation of the Constitution.

“Christian children should not have to leave their Christian beliefs at the schoolhouse door—and neither should Christian bus drivers,” Johnson told me.

“The undeniable spread of limitations on free speech—this time listening to Christian speech on Christian radio—should be a matter of growing concern for a nation founded on free speech and religious liberty,” said Johnson said.

Johnson called what happened in Arkansas “deeply troubling, especially if the bus driver was allowed to listen to other kinds of radio, with programming other than Christian content.”

Now, that’s a good point.

Would the FFRF have taken offense if the bus driver had been jamming to Miley Cyrus or Lil Wayne or that songstress who wears the meat dresses?

I doubt they would have been inclined to complain

Welcome to our fundamentally transformed nation, folks—where musicians like Chris Tomlin, Casting Crowns and Third Day are considered subversive and radio stations doing good deeds must be silenced.