

# FRIEND OR FOE “CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN”

Liberty Counsel and Anchorage Baptist Temple have launched an Alaska campaign to prevent blatant religious discrimination during the holidays.

Liberty Counsel, a nationwide litigation, education, and policy organization dedicated to advancing religious freedom, will **bring lawsuits against any government entity that discriminates** against the public display of religious symbols or songs and has also announced that **it will defend any government entity which abides by the Constitution** and allows the equal expression of religious views. Anchorage Baptist Temple is providing local support for these efforts.

In essence, this campaign will be a “**Friend**” to those entities which allow for the constitutionally protected right of expression but will also be a “**Foe**” to those which attempt to suppress religious liberty.

## THE CAMPAIGN IS DESIGNED TO PREVENT RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

Last year, a Wisconsin public school told students to change “religious” words in the Christmas carols they were going to sing during a Christmas concert. They were prohibited from using words that refer to “Jesus” or “God”; they had to substitute the “religious” words with “secular” ones.

A public school in Georgia instructed its employees that they were not allowed to conduct any Christmas related activities. The employees were not to read Christmas books, make Christmas decorations, or use red and white candy canes because of the religious story behind the origin of the candy cane. Some were even told they may not wear Christmas related attire. Public employers may not discriminate against staff by prohibiting Christmas celebrations.

## THIS DISCRIMINATION IS

# UNCONSTITUTIONAL

## AND LIBERTY COUNSEL WILL DEFEND STUDENTS’ AND EMPLOYEES’ RIGHTS TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS.

Students in public schools may sing Christian Christmas carols, such as “Silent Night,” so long as they also sing secular songs, like “Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer.” Schools may not prohibit access to books about Christmas, because doing so discriminates against a religious viewpoint.

**A publicly sponsored nativity scene on public property is constitutional as long as the display also contains a secular symbol of the holiday.**

In other words, the government may publicly display Mary, Joseph, and Jesus so long as part of the display includes a secular symbol such as Santa Claus.

**Privately sponsored nativity scenes erected by private citizens or groups in a public area are constitutional without secular symbols.**

Regarding the “Friend or Foe” campaign, Mathew Staver, President and General Counsel of Liberty Counsel, says, “We are resolved to stop the Grinch from stealing Christmas. This nation was founded by people who sought to freely exercise their religious liberties. We have no intention of letting these liberties fall by the wayside or be chilled every holiday season by uninformed or hostile government officials.”

**IF YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE BEING PROHIBITED FROM EXERCISING YOUR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DURING THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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