



(Bladensburg, MD World War I Veterans Memorial (Photo credit: First Liberty Institute. May be republished.)

**NATION'S LARGEST VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION ASKS
FEDERAL APPEALS COURT TO AFFIRM CONSTITUTIONALITY OF NINETY-
YEAR-OLD VETERANS MEMORIAL**

*The American Legion asks the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit to uphold
constitutionality of the Bladensburg World War I Veterans Memorial*

RICHMOND, VA, December 7, 2016 – Today, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit heard the case regarding the constitutionality of the Bladensburg World War I Veterans Memorial. On November 15, 2015, the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland ruled that the ninety-year-old veterans memorial was constitutional. After the American Humanist Association appealed the decision, The American Legion asked the Fourth Circuit to uphold the district court's well-reasoned ruling. [Read the brief](#)

Law firms Jones Day and First Liberty Institute represent The American Legion, the largest veterans service organization in the country. A local American Legion post erected the monument 90 years ago in honor of 49 men of Prince George's County, Md., who gave their lives during the First World War. The Legion is committed to defending the honor of the nation's military veterans and the memorials that honor their service.

“Throughout our nation’s history, the military has used the cross shape to honor military service and sacrifice,” Hiram Sasser, Deputy Chief Counsel for First Liberty Institute, says. “We stand to honor the selfless sacrifice of our fallen heroes and ask the Court to uphold the constitutionality of this historic memorial.”

Both Republican and Democratic members of the House and Senate filed an [amicus brief](#) in support of the memorial. In the brief, the Congressional members argued that the use of a cross as a military symbol of courage, sacrifice, and remembrance, especially during World War I, is both deeply rooted and widespread throughout the nation and around the world. The members contend that prohibiting the use of a cross to honor our veterans would exhibit hostility to religion that is contrary to the First Amendment.

Background on the Bladensburg World War I Veterans Memorial

In 1925, a local post of The American Legion, the largest veterans service organization in the country with approximately 2.2 million members, erected the memorial to honor 49 Bladensburg-area men who gave their lives in World War I. The memorial stood for almost 90 years without objection until February 2014 when the American Humanist Association filed a lawsuit. The association alleges that the cross-shaped memorial violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and demands that the monument be demolished, altered, or removed. In November 2015, the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland ruled that the memorial is constitutional. The American Humanist Association appealed the case to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

Read more about the case at FirstLiberty.org/Bladensburg

About First Liberty Institute

[First Liberty Institute](#) is the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans.

To arrange an interview, contact Christine Tang, Associate Counsel for First Liberty Institute. Email: ctang@firstliberty.org, Direct: 469-440-7601, Cell: 469-562-9484.

###