



PRESS RELEASE

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OREGON BAKERS REPLY TO GOVERNMENT BRIEF: DON'T COMPEL PEOPLE TO CELEBRATE CAUSES THAT VIOLATE THEIR BELIEFS

*First Liberty Institute and Boyden Gray file reply brief in the case of
Kleins v. Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries*

Portland, Ore. – Today, First Liberty Institute and Boyden Gray, former White House Counsel for President George H. W. Bush, filed a reply brief with the Oregon Court of Appeals on behalf of Aaron and Melissa Klein. The Oregon couple was fined \$135,000 and lost their bakery for running their business according to their religious beliefs. [Read the reply brief](#)

In the brief, the attorneys challenge the Bureau of Labor and Industries argument that the government can compel citizens to create art and engage in speech that goes against their beliefs. They contend that if the court allows the final order against the Kleins to stand, the court will be putting a stamp of approval on the idea that the government can force artists to celebrate causes that violate their conscience.

“Should the government force Catholics to sculpt totems for Wiccan rituals, or feminists to photograph fraternity initiations, or pro-life videographers to film an abortion? Of course not,” Kelly Shackelford, President and CEO of First Liberty Institute, says. “No one should be forced to contribute to the celebration of an idea that goes against his or her beliefs.”

In 2013, a woman asked the Kleins for a custom-made cake for her same-sex wedding. Aaron and Melissa had served the women before, but as devout Christians, they believed that participating in the wedding celebration would violate their faith, so they declined to design and create the custom cake. The Oregon government responded by punishing them with a \$135,000 penalty, forcing the Kleins to shut down their bakery.

The Kleins’ attorneys contend that the government has violated the Kleins’ constitutional freedoms.

“The First Amendment prohibits government compulsion of art and of speech,” Boyden Gray, former ambassador to the European Union and founding partner of Boyden Gray and Associates, says. “We must ensure that freedom of speech and religious expression is preserved for all Americans.”

Read more about the Kleins’ case at FirstLiberty.org/Kleins

About First Liberty Institute

[First Liberty Institute](http://FirstLiberty.org) is the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans. To arrange an interview, contact Kassie Dulin, Director of Legal Communications for First Liberty Institute. Email: kdulin@firstliberty.org, Direct: 972-941-9575, Cell: 214-542-4334.

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