



PRESS RELEASE

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Appellate Court Prohibits Legislative Meetings from Opening with Invocation by Government Officials

RICHMOND, VA—Today, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit decided 10-5 to prohibit First Liberty Institute clients, Rowan County, NC, Commissioners, from opening commission meetings with an invocation by government officials. This decision comes three years after the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that legislative meetings may open with a prayer given by local religious leaders even if all the prayer givers are of the same faith.

"While we are disappointed in the Fourth Circuit's decision to ban invocations before legislative meetings contrary to Supreme Court precedent, we are encouraged that the split in the vote on the Fourth Circuit demonstrates the need for Supreme Court review on this issue," said Mike Berry, Deputy General Counsel for First Liberty Institute.

First Liberty Institute is one of the law firms representing Rowan County in this matter and is also representing Jackson County, Michigan in a similar matter that is currently pending before the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

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