



*Dr. Eric Walsh*

## **DR. ERIC WALSH FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST THE STATE OF GEORGIA FOR FIRING HIM OVER CONTENT OF HIS SERMONS**

*On behalf of former Obama administration advisor Dr. Eric Walsh, First Liberty Institute files a lawsuit against the State of Georgia for religious discrimination*

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**ATLANTA, GA, April 20, 2016** – Today, First Liberty Institute and the law firm of Parks, Chesin & Walbert filed a lawsuit on behalf of Dr. Eric Walsh against the Georgia Department of Public Health, alleging that state officials engaged in religious discrimination against Dr. Walsh by firing him over the content of his sermons. Read more about this case and view lawsuit: [firstliberty.org/walsh](http://firstliberty.org/walsh)

Dr. Eric Walsh is a public health expert with multiple advanced degrees who served on President Obama’s Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDs. In May 2014, Walsh accepted a position with Georgia’s Department of Public Health (DPH) to be the District Health Director for Northwest Georgia. A week later, Georgia state officials requested copies of sermons he had preached as a lay minister in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Topics covered in the sermons included following God, having compassion on the poor, health, marriage, sexuality, world religions, science, creationism, and more.

In an email, the DPH Director of Human Resources assigned several of Dr. Walsh’s sermons to employees to review and critique. ([View email](#)) The day after Dr. Walsh provided sermons to the state, government officials informed Dr. Walsh that he was terminated.

“I couldn’t believe they fired me because of things I talked about in my sermons,” said Dr. Walsh. “It was devastating. I have been unable to get a job in public health since then.”

First Liberty Institute, along with Atlanta law firm Parks, Chesin & Walbert, filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia against the State of Georgia's Department of Public Health. The complaint charges the state with religious discrimination and retaliation against Dr. Walsh.

"No one should be fired for simply expressing his religious beliefs," stated Andrew Coffman, partner in the law firm of Parks, Chesin & Walbert and a First Liberty volunteer attorney. "In America, it is against the law to fire an employee for expressing his religious beliefs – especially when that expression takes place in a church setting."

"Religious liberty means we should be able to find sanctuary in our own sanctuary," said Jeremy Dys, Senior Counsel for First Liberty. "If the government is allowed to fire someone over what he said in his sermons, then they can come after any of us for our beliefs on anything."

Read more about this case and view a video: [firstliberty.org/walsh](http://firstliberty.org/walsh)

### **About First Liberty Institute**

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

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