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PRESS RELEASE

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TXDOT BANS TEN COMMANDMENTS SIGN ON TEXAS CITIZEN'S PRIVATE PROPERTY

Liberty Institute Issues Demand Letter Asserting Texans' Religious Liberty Rights and Seeking Immediate Rescission of Unlawful Removal Order

HEMPHILL, TX MAY 15, 2014— Today, Liberty Institute on behalf of Hemphill, TX resident Jeanette Golden sent a demand letter to the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) after it banned her from placing a Ten Commandments sign on her own private property. According to an e-mail from the TXDOT Associate General Counsel, “the sign cannot be permitted” and “no permit is possible.” The TXDOT attorney also joked that he “wonder[ed] how they’d feel about a quote from the Quran?” Follow this link to view a copy of the TXDOT e-mails: <http://www.libertyinstitute.org/document.doc?id=168>

In the letter, Liberty Institute attorneys explain that TXDOT’s ban violates Mrs. Golden’s right to freedom of religious expression, and specifically the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act (TRFRA), federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Article I, Section 6 of the Texas Constitution. The letter gives TXDOT 60 days to respond, and it requests that TXDOT immediately rescind its ban and removal order, and allow Mrs. Golden to keep the religious sign on her private property. Follow this link to view a copy of the demand letter online: <http://www.libertyinstitute.org/document.doc?id=166>

“It is outrageous that TXDOT is preventing Texans from having signs on their own private property,” said Mike Berry, Liberty Institute Senior Counsel. “Religious freedom and private property rights are some of the most sacred rights Texans and Americans enjoy, dating back to the founding of Texas and our nation. It is also shocking that a TXDOT attorney would belittle the religious beliefs of Texans.”

In August 2013, Mrs. Golden, acquired a 6 x 12-foot sign, depicting the Bible’s Ten Commandments from the organization God’s Ten. She placed the sign on her private property, located near Hemphill, Texas, in Sabine County.

Liberty Institute is a national nonprofit legal group dedicated to defending and restoring religious liberty across America — in our schools, for our churches, inside our military and throughout the public arena. Liberty’s vision is to reestablish religious liberty in accordance with the principles of our Founding Fathers. For information, visit www.LibertyInstitute.org.