



**Press Release**  
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## **First Liberty Institute Defends Local Rabbi From Religious Discrimination by Village of Airmont Officials**

*Local Rabbi faces fine and jail time for praying with others in his own home*

**Airmont, NY**—At a hearing this afternoon in the Village of Airmont court, attorneys with First Liberty Institute will represent a local rabbi, Moishe Berger, who has been ticketed for hosting prayer meetings in his home. The Village of Airmont has a long history of violating the religious liberty of its orthodox Jewish residents, dating back to its founding.

“Airmont has been in litigation almost since its inception because of its efforts to drive orthodox Jewish citizens underground,” said Keisha Russell, Associate Counsel for First Liberty Institute. “First Liberty Institute will pursue all available legal measures to protect our client and to put an end to the Village of Airmont’s government enforced religious discrimination once and for all. The Village of Airmont has ignored the federal laws protecting religious freedom. Thirty years of religious bigotry are enough.”

Members of a small Orthodox Jewish community have been meeting together for prayer in the home of Rabbi Berger. These gatherings were without incident until the Village brought charges against him for prayer meetings in his home. He now faces fines of up to \$1000 and up to one year in jail for praying with others in his home without Airmont’s permission.

Airmont was incorporated in 1991. The same year of its incorporation, the United States filed suit against Airmont alleging that the town had been incorporated for the purpose of excluding Jewish citizens through zoning restrictions on their places of worship. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second District [agreed](#). Then in 2008, the United States and different private plaintiffs sued Airmont again. The private plaintiff settled with Airmont. The dispute between the United States and Airmont settled in a Consent Decree.

The hearing will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the Airmont Village Hall at 251 Cherry Lane, Airmont, New York.

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### **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 Lacey McNiel at [media@firstliberty.org](mailto:media@firstliberty.org) or by calling 972-941-4453.