

**Religious Liberty Law Firm to Delaware Town Officials:
Banning Nativity Scene Violates First Amendment**

First Liberty Institute represents Knights of Columbus group banned from placing Nativity at Rehoboth Beach, Delaware Town Circle

Rehoboth Beach, DE—Today, on behalf of the local Knights of Columbus council, First Liberty Institute sent a letter to city officials in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware urging them to reverse their recent blanket ban of a Knights of Columbus crèche, or Nativity, from any city property.

You can read the letter, [here](#).

“City officials either have terribly wrong information or such animus toward religion and people of faith that they would rather break the law than allow a Nativity display at Christmas time,” said Roger Byron, Senior Counsel for First Liberty Institute. “It is a blatant violation of the First Amendment to ban religious displays from public property.”

For decades, a free-standing crèche has been part of the Christmas holiday tradition in Rehoboth Beach. Its traditional location is on the Bandstand circle. Other yearly holiday displays on-site include a Christmas tree, light displays, and a large Santa’s House nearby on the Boardwalk erected, owned and displayed by the local Chamber of Commerce. The local Knights of Columbus have been trying to continue the tradition of the crèche display. But beginning last year, city officials banned the crèche from city property, claiming it cannot be placed on the circle or other public property because it is religious.

This November, during a television interview about placement of the Knight’s crèche, Rehoboth Beach Mayor Paul Kuhns reiterated the City’s anti-religion mandate, saying “city policy is not to have religious displays on public property or city property.”

In its letter, First Liberty explains that both the “blanket ban on religious displays” and “the City’s prohibition of KOC’s religious Christmas display while allowing a secular Christmas display by another local organization” is “textbook viewpoint discrimination.” “The City has prohibited KOC from displaying a crèche as part of the holiday displays on or immediately adjacent to the Bandstand circle solely because the crèche is religious. Such viewpoint discrimination is repugnant to the First Amendment, unlawful, and provides KOC ‘entitle[ment] to relief.’”

Byron added, “We hope the city officials are simply misinformed about the law. We encourage them to follow the law and allow the Knights and the people of this town to continue the beloved tradition of a crèche as one of the holiday displays at the Bandstand circle.”

###

About First Liberty Institute

[First Liberty Institute](#) is a non-profit public interest law firm and the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans.

To arrange an interview, contact Chris Freund at media@firstliberty.org or by calling 469-440-7566.