

Former Postal Carrier Who Lost Job After USPS Refused Religious Accommodation Appeals to U.S. Supreme Court

Attorneys ask Justices to enforce federal law that protects the right of American workers to honor Sabbath in accordance with faith.

Washington, D.C.—Today, First Liberty Institute, Baker Botts LLP, the Church State Council, and the Independence Law Center filed a petition for writ of certiorari with the Supreme Court of the United States on behalf of former mailman Gerald Groff. The petition asks the Court to reverse a Third Circuit Court of Appeals decision finding that the United States Postal Service (“USPS”) is not required to provide religious accommodation allowing Groff to observe the Sunday Sabbath.

You can read the petition [here](#).

“No American should be forced to choose between their religion and their job,” said Stephanie Taub, Senior Counsel at First Liberty. “We are asking the Court to overturn a poorly-reasoned case from the 1970s that tips the balance in favor of corporations and the government over the religious rights of employees.”

“Observing the Sabbath day is critical to many faiths—a day ordained by God. No one should be forced to violate the Sabbath to hold a job,” added Randall Wenger of the Independence Law Center.

Aaron Streett of Baker Botts said, “We are simply asking the Supreme Court to apply the law as written and require employers to grant meaningful religious accommodations to people of faith.”

Alan Reinach of the Church State Council said of the appeal, “The Supreme Court needs to fix its misguided interpretation of the law that permits government and corporate employers alike to discriminate against those seeking religious accommodation for trivial reasons.”

Gerald Groff began his career with the USPS in 2012 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, as a mail carrier. When the post office started delivering packages on Sundays for Amazon, Groff asked for a religious accommodation to observe Sunday Sabbath. The postmaster initially granted his request, allowing him to work additional shifts on other days of the week instead, but later the USPS offered only proposals that would still require Groff to work on Sundays and thereby violate his conscience. Forced to choose between his faith and his career, Groff resigned and sued the USPS. The district court sided with the USPS, concluding that accommodating Groff would pose an undue hardship on USPS. The Third Circuit upheld that decision.

Attorneys for Groff, argue that, as a federal employee with USPS, Groff was protected by Title VII from discrimination based on his religious beliefs and practices. They suggest the Supreme Court re-examine *TWA v. Hardison*, the key case that determined the lower courts’ decisions.

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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 Peyton Luke at media@firstliberty.org or by calling 972-941-4453.