

Supreme Court rejects Ten Commandments monument appeal

Written by By Matthew Reichbach NM Political Report
Friday, 20 October 2017 08:41

The case of a statue of the Ten Commandments in Bloomfield came to an end Monday, as the U.S. Supreme Court denied statue supporters' an appeal to the high court.

The city of Bloomfield was ordered by a federal district court to remove the monument in 2014, citing the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, which says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that ruling two years later, leaving the city's final option to push for a U.S. Supreme Court hearing.

The American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico announced Monday that the attempted appeal was rejected.

"This is a victory for the religious liberty of people everywhere," ACLU of New Mexico Executive Director Peter Simonson said in a statement. "The Supreme Court's decision to let the rulings against the monument stand sends a strong message that the government should not be in the business of picking and choosing which sets of religious beliefs enjoy special favor in the community. To be clear, we would defend the right of any church, homeowner or business to raise this monument on their own property. But we cannot tolerate a city government using tax payer dollars to fund a monument that celebrates one religion above all others."

The case was unique in that the city sought to use private funds to place the monument on city property. The monument was placed alongside depictions of moments in U.S. history like the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence.

"Just because a historical monument also has spiritual significance does not mean it should be excluded from the public square," the Alliance Defending Freedom's Sarah Kramer wrote in [a blog post](#) about the Supreme Court's decision. "The Supreme Court has recognized this once but failed to reinforce that distinction."

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