

ACLJ Files Major Lawsuit Challenging California Ban on Singing in Church

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WASHINGTON, DC, USA, July 16, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) has just filed a lawsuit challenging the state of California's ban on singing and chanting activities in places of worship on behalf of Calvary Chapel of Ukiah, Calvary Chapel Fort Bragg, and River of Life Church, in Oroville, California.



The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ)

On July 1, 2020, California updated the health order to include a Worship Guidance that [now states](#), "Places of worship must therefore discontinue singing and chanting activities."

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Jordan Sekulow, Executive Director of ACLJ

On or about July 11, 2020, a spokeswoman for California's Office of Emergency Services confirmed that the worship ban "must be followed." This ban violates our plaintiff's constitutional rights under the First Amendment and Equal Protection clauses of the U. S. Constitution. (Click [HERE](#) to read the full complaint.)

The ACLJ immediately condemned the California governor's July 1st ban on singing and chanting in places of worship. Banning singing in California churches is an unconstitutional abuse of power. And to do it in the name

of a pandemic is despicable. This ban is clearly targeted at religion. It is clearly a violation of the First Amendment and a direct violation of religious liberty.

To fight this unconstitutional abuse of power, the ACLJ has teamed up with Tyler & Bursch, The National Center for Law and Policy (NCLP), and Advocates for Faith & Freedom in filing this lawsuit.

Jordan Sekulow, Executive Director of ACLJ, immediately condemned the California governor's July 1 ban on singing and chanting in places of worship: "Banning singing in California churches is an unconstitutional abuse of power. And to do it in the name of a pandemic is despicable. This ban is clearly targeted at religion. It is clearly a violation of the First Amendment and a direct violation of religious liberty."

Robert Tyler, Partner at Tyler & Bursch, LLP, added: "Let me be clear, the State does not have the jurisdiction to ban houses of worship from singing praises to God."

On July 13, 2020, Governor Newsom issued yet [another order](#) governing indoor operations. Under this most recent order, worship services, together with protests, fitness centers, malls, offices for non-essential actors and personal care services are permitted to remain open in the counties in which our clients are located, and singing and chanting is only banned in worship services. Such activities are still permissible for all other indoor activities, including protests.

The orders are clear: Failure to comply with the Worship Ban "constitutes an imminent threat to public health and menace to public health, constitutes a public nuisance, and is punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both."

Named as defendants, all in their official capacities only, are California Governor Gavin Newsom, California Public Health Officer Sonia Angell, M.D., Mendocino County Public Health Officer Noemi Doham, M.D., and Butte County Public Health Officer Ngoc-Phuong Luu, M.D.

The lawsuit requests a restraining order and injunctive relief based on the First and Fourteenth Amendments. Our clients would like to see a quick resolution, with the governor and health officers changing or modifying this wording.

Since the initiation of the lockdown, restrictive mandates in the state's health orders have been applied to houses of worship unfairly and much more aggressively than other businesses arbitrarily deemed essential, including restaurants and other gatherings. In fact, once they are allowed to reopen, this current state order does not ban singing or chanting in dine-in restaurants/bars/wineries, casinos, family entertainment centers, day camps, hotels, shopping malls, childcare centers, schools, or music, tv, and film production.

In Mendocino and Butte counties, indoor worship services, together with protests, fitness centers, malls, offices for non-essential actors, and personal care services, as well as day camps, hotels, childcare centers, schools, or music, tv, and film production are permitted to remain open. Yet, singing and chanting is only banned in places of worship.

Over 230,000 people have already signed the ACLJ petition to stop the unconstitutional ban on singing in church. SIGN IT TODAY: <https://aclj.org/religious-liberty/dont-ban-singing-in-church>

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