



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on July 3, 2023

Arkansas Governor Responds to Atheists' Demands: "My Answer Is No"

Within days of Arkansas Governor Sarah Sanders [proudly posting on Facebook](#) a photo of the chalk drawing of a stained-glass window surrounding the Cross of Christ that her children had drawn, the ever-vigilant anti-religion Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU) [fired off its demand](#):

While you and your family members are free to create and display religious imagery in private areas of your Mansion and its grounds, displaying a cross at the entrance [in Sanders' words] "to welcome people into the Governor's mansion" violates the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

We therefore ask that you remove the display and refrain from placing similar displays in public areas.



AP Images
Sarah Sanders

Sanders responded [via Twitter](#):

I have received your letter and my answer is no.

I will not erase the beautiful cross my kids drew in chalk on the driveway of the Governor's Mansion or remove my [Facebook] post ... and I will not now or ever hide [the fact] that I am a Christian.

She clarified and expanded her position in her response to the AU:

You are wrong to claim that our Constitution prevents public officials, let alone their families, from making earnest expressions of religious faith. Our founding documents are riddled with religious language - stating plainly that the very rights you claim to defend are "endowed by our Creator."

You are asking me to ignore that truth and hide a crucial part of my identity and the identity of my kids. That, I will not do.

To back its case, AU referred to a recent Supreme Court ruling, *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*, claiming that somehow that ruling enforced their beloved canard, the "wall of separation between



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church and state.”

That wall is crumbling, but apparently AU hasn’t gotten the message. In [writing for the majority](#) in that case, Supreme Court Justice Neal Gorsuch said:

Respect for religious expressions is indispensable to life in a free and diverse Republic.

Here, a government entity sought to punish an individual for engaging in a personal religious observance, based on a *mistaken view* that it has a duty to suppress religious observances even as it allows comparable secular speech. [Emphasis added.]

The Constitution neither mandates nor tolerates that kind of discrimination. Mr. Kennedy is entitled to summary judgment on his religious exercise and free speech claims.

And so is the governor of Arkansas. To confirm, Gorsuch wrote the majority opinion last week in [303 Creative v. Elenis](#):

Ms. [Lorie] Smith seeks to engage in protected First Amendment speech; Colorado seeks to compel speech she does not wish to provide. As the Tenth Circuit observed, if Ms. Smith offers wedding websites celebrating marriages she endorses, the State intends to compel her to create custom websites celebrating other marriages she does not.

Colorado seeks to compel this speech in order to “*excis[e] certain ideas or viewpoints from the public dialogue.*” [Emphasis added.]

As [DiscoverTheNetworks](#) notes, Americans United “seeks to eliminate the presence of religious symbols and practices in public places.” It interprets the First Amendment’s guarantee to mean that “‘religion and government must stay separate for the benefit of both,’ a meaning that bears little resemblance to the actual wording of the First Amendment” — or the intent of the Founders.

Americans United began just months after the odious decision the far-left majority ruling the Supreme Court made in 1947, [Everson v. Board of Education](#). In that notorious decision Justice Hugo Black wrote for the majority: “In the words of [Thomas] Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect ‘a wall of separation between Church and State.’ ... [Therefore] the First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. That wall must be kept high and impregnable.”

According to DiscoverTheNetworks, AU was founded with the help of the American Secular Humanist Society and the American Ethical Union. AU’s first president, Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, reflected its worldview without religion. Oxnam “was a past president of Planned Parenthood and chaired the Massachusetts branch of the pro-communist Council of American-Soviet Friendship” before becoming AU’s president.

AU met with remarkable success early on, supporting the then-liberal Supreme Court in its rulings to banish prayer and Bible reading in public schools. Now, however, the republican foundations are slowly being restored by recent decisions of the newly originalist majority of the high court.

Americans United picked on the wrong individual in Arkansas Governor Sarah Sanders, who knows her history and has the backbone to stand up to the AU bullies.

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