

FINAL DC COURT RULING VINDICATES DEFENDANTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

ADVOCATES IN 12-YEAR-OLD “UCI” CASE

Basic First Amendment Protections Upheld in Historic Decision

On August 28, 2023, the **Washington, DC (District of Columbia) Superior Court** issued its **final ruling** in the case of **“The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification International, et al., versus Hyun Jin Moon, et al.”**, more commonly known as the **“UCI” case**. The court, following the **lead of the DC Court of Appeals ruling last August, found completely in favor of the Defendants** - who were all volunteer board members of the religious non-profit, UCI. The current judge, **Judge Alfred Irving**, concluded on the merits that the Plaintiffs (Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, Universal Peace Federation, and Unification Church of Japan) had no standing whatsoever for continuance of the case, dismissed all remaining claims against the defendants, and officially closed the case completely dismissing the case with prejudice. **This decision represents a total victory for UCI and for religious freedom.**

Originating in May of 2011 in the midst of a religious schism within the Unification Movement founded by the late **Reverend Dr. Sun Myung Moon**, the case had generated great concern among defenders of the First Amendment, both nationally and internationally - including Right To Believe. As the defendants had argued from the beginning and the final ruling emphatically confirmed, **the religious nature of the case prohibited it from being decided by ANY court within the USA, according to the U.S. Constitution.** However, under the auspices of 10 consecutive judges through the more than 12 years of costly litigation, the DC Superior Court had ruled incorrectly that the board of the religious non-profit, UCI, was to be taken over by the plaintiffs AND that each of the unpaid volunteers on the UCI board would have to pay hundreds of millions of dollars in damages! Further, UCI had been prohibited for years by one of the earlier rulings from providing any funding to non-profit organizations that had previously been the instruments for UCI to fulfill its religious responsibilities! **These unconstitutional rulings have now been irrevocably overturned!**

Such egregious abuses of the First Amendment and blatant miscarriages of justice stoked the ire of many thousands of individuals and organizations around the world. **Over 5,000 letters, emails, photos and videos from around the world flooded the court denouncing the wrongful rulings.** Here in the U.S., the **Jewish Council for Religious Freedom**, the **Beckett Fund for Religious Liberty**, and 10 individual esteemed professors had all filed *amicus* (friend of the court) briefs denouncing those rulings. Such a tremendous response to the UCI case reconfirms that America and much of the world **stand by religious freedom, not tolerating abuse of the First Amendment by any court.** (The plaintiffs *could* try to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, but their chances are miniscule and would be a continued huge waste of time and donated money, as their arguments have already been rejected by all lower courts.)

Right To Believe is proud of having organized rallies of protest, both at the Superior Court and virtually, during this trial, which from the beginning was an ill-intentioned abuse of the justice system. We are grateful to those who rallied with us and to those thousands who showed their strong support by sending the 5,000+ communications to the court. **Finally, after 12 years of struggle and many millions of lost donated dollars, this frivolous and tragic case is over.**

Howard C. Self-President, Right To Believe