



AMERICAN ATHEISTS, INC.

Dave Kong

California State Director
900 Bush Street, Unit 210
San Francisco, CA 94109

Tel: (415) 771-9872

Fax: (415) 771-9872

E-mail: dksf@atheists.org

www.atheists.org/ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 27, 2005

12:00 p.m.

For more information, contact:

Ellen Johnson, PRESIDENT (973) 625-6900

Dave Silverman, COMMUNICATIONS DIR. (732) 648-9333

Dave Kong, CA STATE DIRECTOR (415) 771-9872

Atheists Decry Court Ruling Upholding Limited Decalogue Display Demonstration Planned at Ninth Circuit Appeals Court

Monday's U.S. Supreme Court rulings in two cases involving public display of the Judeo-Christian Ten Commandments amount to a "backdoor" excuse to allow the government promotion of religion, charges **American Atheists**, a national civil rights group.

Ellen Johnson, President of American Atheists, said that the decisions in *Van Orden v. Perry* and *McCreary v. Kentucky ACLU* show the high court "was looking for a way to approve the practice of permitting the Ten Commandments and other religious symbols in public places. The Judeo-Christian Ten Commandments are undeniably a religious text, and their display—even when camouflaged with other historical documents or artifacts—is a clear endorsement of religion."

Dave Kong, California director for American Atheists, criticized the rulings for being inconsistent. "Both situations should have been declared unconstitutional. In the Texas case, the Court really strained its logic in several ways to allow this religious display. Today's decisions have blurred the line of separation between religion and government in favor of the Christian religion and show a disregard for the civil rights of millions of Atheists and others with no religious beliefs."

American Atheists Communications Director **Dave Silverman** noted the decisions guarantee future legal action on other public religious displays. "It took over a half century to overturn the odious practice of segregation," said Silverman. "The effort to end government sponsorship of religion is far from over—it is just entering a new phase."

Mr. Kong announced that **American Atheists California** and Bay Area Atheist groups will be **demonstrating tomorrow** at the **San Francisco Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Building** to express their disappointment with the rulings. Mr. Kong stressed that while this will be a peaceful demonstration, "the Atheists will no longer be ignored."

The American Atheist Center

P.O. Box 5733

Parsippany, NJ 07054-6733

Phone: (908) 276-7300

www.atheists.org

WHAT: Demonstration to Protest the Supreme Court's 10 Commandments Rulings

WHO: American Atheists California and Bay Area Atheist groups

WHERE: San Francisco Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, 7th and Mission

WHEN: Tomorrow (June 28), 10:00 a.m.

American Atheists is a nationwide movement that defends the civil rights of nonbelievers, works for the separation of church and state, and addresses issues of First Amendment public policy

American Atheists, Inc. • P.O. Box 5733 • Parsippany, NJ 07054-6733

Tel: (908) 276-7300 • Fax: (973) 625-6901