

Oregon mother denied adoption by reason of her Christian faith

cnav.news/2023/04/04/accountability/executive/oregon-mother-denied-adoption-christian/

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April 4, 2023



The Oregon Department of Human Services won't let a single mother adopt – because she is a Christian.

ADF sues Oregon

Alliance Defending Freedom filed a [federal lawsuit](#) against five Oregon Department of Human Services officials.

They also released a [statement](#) announcing their lawsuit and their reasons for filing it.

Read the press release: <https://t.co/Oq4XsQTyUq> pic.twitter.com/IXwFTsCcJb

— Alliance Defending Freedom (@ADFLegal) [April 3, 2023](#)

The case involves Jessica Bates, who has five children of her own, and is widowed. She seeks to adopt a sibling pair; such pairs are normally difficult to place. But the Oregon DHS denied her adoption application on the basis of her having an unsuitable home.

From the complaint:

The Oregon Department of Human Services (the Department or DHS) has promulgated a rule that persons seeking to adopt must “accept” and “support” the sexual orientation and gender identity of any child the state could place in the applicant’s home. OAR § 413-200-0308(2)(k). Under this rule, caregivers must agree to use a child’s preferred pronouns, take a child to affirming events like Pride parades, or sign the child up for dangerous pharmaceutical interventions like puberty blockers and hormone shots—no matter a child’s age, no matter whether a child actually desires these things, and no matter how deeply these requirements violate the caregiver’s religious convictions.

ADF legal counsel Johannes Widmalm-Delphonse said this:

Oregon’s policy makes a sweeping claim that all persons who hold certain religious beliefs—beliefs held by millions of Americans from diverse religious faiths—are categorically unfit to care for children.

The Blaze [contributed](#) to this report and gathered the three links above.

Legal theory, prayer for relief, etc.

Alliance Defending Freedom alleges that Oregon DHS has violated Jessica Bates’:

1. Freedom of speech, association, and assembly, concerning pronouns and “neo-pronouns,” and associating with her church,
2. Free exercise of her Christian faith, and
3. Equal protection of the laws.

Oregon Administrative Rules, [Chapter 413, Division 200, Rule 0308](#), clause 2(k) reads:

Applicants must ... respect, accept and support the race, ethnicity, cultural identities, national origin, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disabilities, spiritual beliefs, and socioeconomic status, of a child or young adult in the care or custody of the Department, and provide opportunities to enhance the positive self-concept and understanding of the child or young adult’s heritage.

This rule is deliberately vague in its requirements. But the reasons ODHS gave for denying Jessica Bates’ application, if not specious, would logically flow from the above rule. How or even whether ODHS determined that the sibling pair in question were subject to the use of

neopronouns, taking them to Pride events, or enrolling them for surgical mutilation or hormonal poisoning, remains unclear.

ADF is asking for declaratory and injunctive relief, plus attorney fees and court costs.

The five defendants in the case are the director and deputy director of ODHS, the Interim Director of its Child Welfare Division, and a certification supervisor and officer for ODHS in Malheur County, Oregon.

Voters in Malheur County have already voted “Yes” to instruct their County Court to discuss moving the Oregon-Idaho border.