

Liberal court upholds pastor's free-speech rights

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Hoyo

The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled in favor of Oakland, California, pro-life activist and pastor Walter Hoyo.

Hoyo was arrested at a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic on charges of violating an Oakland ordinance that essentially required him to get permission before saying anything to women entering the clinic for an abortion.

Dana Cody, executive director of [Life Legal Defense Foundation](#), filed suit challenging the constitutionality of the ordinance.



Cody

"Several months ago the federal district court said the ordinance was constitutional -- and not only [that] was it constitutional, it was okay to prosecute Pastor Hoyo but not the clinic volunteers who blocked him, surrounded him so that women can't talk to him," says Cody.

As the attorney explains, that permitted only the pro-abortion view to be expressed. The case was appealed to the Ninth Circuit.

"They basically said that they agreed with Pastor Hoyo that there were grave constitutional problems in the way in which the city had been enforcing the ordinance, and that based on the facts presented to the court their policy is constitutionally invalid and a content-based regulation of speech," explains the spokeswoman.

The case is being sent back to the lower court for further consideration.



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