

**Knights of Columbus wins Pledge of Allegiance case in Federal Appeals Court**  
*Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upholds constitutionality of "under God" in Pledge*

(SAN FRANCISCO, CA) -- The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals [ruled today](#) that the words "one nation under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance "do not violate the Establishment Clause" of the First Amendment to the Constitution.

The Knights of Columbus led the campaign to add the words "under God" to the Pledge in the early 1950s, and the trial court agreed to allow the Knights of Columbus to join the present case as defendants when it was originally filed in 2005.

"This decision is a victory for common sense," Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said. "It is also a welcome reversal of the Ninth Circuit's 2002 decision in a similar case that was ultimately thrown out by the Supreme Court on technical grounds. Today, the Court got it absolutely right: recitation of the Pledge is a patriotic exercise, not a religious prayer. Best of all, the Court said that the words 'under God' add a 'note of importance which a Pledge to our Nation ought to have and which in our culture ceremonial references to God arouse.' Every reasonable person knows that, and today's decision is a breath of fresh air from a court system that has too often seemed to be almost allergic to public references to God. This is a very good day for America," Anderson concluded.

In today's ruling, the Court noted that, "Among the 'self-evident truths' the Framers believed was the concept that all people are entitled to certain inalienable rights given to them by the 'Laws of Nature and Nature's God' and that the purpose of government should be to "secure those rights.'" Such beliefs provide the context in which the words of the Pledge must be understood, the Court said.

The Knights of Columbus and several individual Knights and their families were defendant-intervenors in the case, and the court's 2-1 decision incorporates many of the arguments presented to the Court by [The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty](#), a public interest law firm that represented the Knights in the case. Oral arguments before the Ninth Circuit panel had been heard in December 2007. Other defendants in the case included the United States government and a Sacramento-area school district.

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March 11, 2010