KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
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Supreme Court rejects challenge to "under God" in Pledge of Allegiance

Knights of Columbus waged successful defense on East and West Coast cases

June 14, 2011 - Flag Day

(NEW HAVEN, CONN.) - The United States Supreme Court has refused to hear an appeal of a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the Pledge of Allegiance, thus ending a seven year battle involving two separate cases, one originating in California and the other in New Hampshire. The Knights of Columbus, represented by the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, played a key role in defending the Pledge as a "defendant intervenor" in both cases.

"The Knights of Columbus is proud to have played a major role in successfully defending the constitutionality of the words 'under God' in the Pledge of Allegiance," Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said. "We were instrumental in persuading Congress to add those words to the Pledge in 1954, and they express a fundamental belief that we have held as a nation since our founding, that we 'are endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights.' The notion that this somehow violates the First Amendment has now been soundly rejected by both the First and Ninth Circuit Courts of Appeal, and the Supreme Court has now allowed both decisions to stand. It is a victory for common sense."

The Ninth Circuit upheld the constitutionality of the Pledge in March 2010 and the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of the California case in March 2011. The First Circuit upheld the constitutionality of the Pledge in November 2011 and the Supreme Court denied certiorari in that case yesterday, June 13, 2011.