



SLF Supports the First Amendment Rights of Gabriel Olivier ***Pastor Given No Way to Challenge Government Censorship***

[April 17, 2025] Southeastern Legal Foundation (SLF), an organization of top attorneys that regularly defend Americans’ constitutional rights, filed an [amicus curiae brief](#) urging the United States Supreme Court to take up the [case](#) of Gabriel Olivier, a speaker who faces punishment for simply trying to preach in a public square and cannot even challenge the censorship he faces.

Mr. Olivier often preaches in public areas, but when his city passed an ordinance forcing him to move to a “protest area” far away from his intended audience, he faced a choice: **either move and be silenced, or speak and risk punishment.** He chose the latter and was charged with violating the law. Mr. Olivier wants to sue the city for violating his First Amendment free speech rights. But the Fifth Circuit won’t let him because he was already convicted under the law, and finding the law unconstitutional would make his conviction invalid. **Now, he is taking his case to the Supreme Court to stop the censorship against him.**

SLF argues in its [brief](#) that the Fifth Circuit’s ruling defies logic and will have a devastating impact on speakers. “Olivier was never confined, and therefore never had access to habeas relief. Thus, allowing the decision below to stand will make it impossible for Olivier—and others like him—to vindicate his First Amendment rights. For that reason alone, the Court should grant the petition.”

SLF states, “Too often, the government ignores that free speech is the cornerstone of our Constitution and fails to give speakers the protections they are entitled to. This case is a perfect opportunity for the Supreme Court to resolve not only a bizarre rule that prevents plaintiffs from challenging bad laws, but also to affirm that public squares are places meant for open discourse.”

SLF urges the Supreme Court to take up Olivier’s petition because only it can resolve the confusion among the lower courts. It is imperative that the Supreme Court step in and affirm the time-honored tradition that Americans’ free speech rights are most secure in public spaces.

Southeastern Legal Foundation is a national, nonprofit legal organization dedicated to defending liberty and Rebuilding the American Republic®. Since 1976, SLF has been going to court for the American people when the government overreaches and violates your constitutional rights.

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