



Focus on Religious Freedom

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Oregon Denies Adoption After Woman Refuses to Back Gender Ideology, Homosexuality

Tyler Arnold/CNA, [Nation](#), April 6, 2023

An Oregon woman filed a [federal lawsuit](#) against the state's Department of Human Services after she was denied the opportunity to adopt a child because she refused to express support for gender ideology and homosexuality. The woman, Jessica Bates, filed an application to become certified to adopt a child from the Oregon foster care system. However, to obtain the certification, a person must agree to "respect, accept and support the ... sexual orientation, gender identity [and] gender expression ... of a child or young adult" who is placed in the home, according to the state's policy.

Although Bates promised to love and treat any child as her own, she told the certification officer that she "would not support their lifestyle or encourage any behavior related to their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression" if it went against her religious beliefs. The certification officer asked whether she would use a child's preferred pronouns if he or she ever identified as transgender and whether she would assist a child with transitioning his or her gender through hormone therapy. Bates said she would not.

Because her stance did not comply with DHS regulations, her application was denied. A spokesperson for the state agency was not immediately available for comment Thursday. Bates, who is receiving pro bono legal representation from Alliance Defending Freedom, argued in her lawsuit that this requirement infringes on her First Amendment rights to freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of religion.

"Oregon's policy amounts to an ideological litmus test: people who hold secular or 'progressive' views on sexual orientation and gender identity are eligible to participate in child welfare programs, while people of faith with religiously informed views are disqualified because they don't agree with the state's orthodoxy," ADF Senior Counsel Jonathan Scruggs said in a statement.

"The government can't exclude certain communities of faith from foster care and adoption services because the state doesn't like their particular religious beliefs," he said. **Read more here:** bit.ly/3qaOZlc