

Dear Editor,

What country does Colorado's Attorney General John Suthers think Colorado is in? Doesn't he know that the United States was founded by people who sought to escape persecution by their government because of their religious faith? Why then does John Suthers and his office persecute Jack Phillips and Masterpiece Cakeshop, Inc. simply for Jack Phillips's Christian beliefs?

For the past year, John Suthers and his office have been prosecuting Jack Phillips and his bakery using the public accommodation "non-discrimination" statute. His offense? Jack Phillips declined to design and create a wedding cake for a same-sex marriage due to his religious beliefs. Suthers, teaming up with the ACLU, has gone after Phillips and, if successful, will ultimately force the doors of Masterpiece Cakeshop, Inc., to close after 20 years of serving the public and creating jobs.

On July 19, 2012, two men, Charlie Craig and David Mullins, went to Masterpiece Cakeshop, Inc., and inquired about a wedding cake for their same-sex wedding. Now mind you, same-sex weddings are illegal, unconstitutional and against the repeatedly stated public policy of the state of Colorado. In fact, even in the most recent civil union legislation (which goes against every vote ever taken on the issue in the state of Colorado), it is stated three times that the public policy of Colorado is that marriage is between one man and one woman. Factually speaking, John Suthers is prosecuting a man, and jeopardizing this man's business and his family's well-being, for declining to participate in a ceremony that is illegal and not recognized in the state of Colorado. So, despite Jack's strong Christian faith and that he believes that God does not want him to participate in or encourage same-sex marriages which are contrary to Biblical teachings, John Suthers apparently thinks Jack should be forced to design and create the rainbow colored wedding cake that Mullins and Craig had at their "wedding" reception.

The public accommodation statute (which up until a few months ago included criminal penalties, complete with jail time) was amended to include sexual orientation. The statute forbids "discrimination" *because of* sexual orientation. Jack Phillips specifically told Craig and Mullins that he would make them any other baked goods, but *he could not design and create a wedding cake for a same-sex marriage because of his religious beliefs*. Jack

Phillips did not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation; he declined participation in speech and activity that would violate his religious beliefs. That is not what the statute is designed to protect against. Had Suthers and his office actually read the case file prior to charging forward with this unjust prosecution, they would clearly see that there was no discrimination *because of* sexual orientation; Jack Phillips did something that few people have the courage and integrity to do these days—he followed his principles and stayed true to his faith. And his reward? Suthers has partnered up with the ACLU and the Colorado Civil Rights Commission (whose members are appointed by Gov. Hickenlooper) to attempt to force Jack Phillips to make that rainbow colored cake, to hang a sign in his business saying that he will do so, and basically be “reeducated” and forced into not only accepting, but embracing and actively participating in, same-sex marriage... something that is still against the law in Colorado and the majority of other states. And if Jack refuses to do so? He’ll be forced out of business.

Fellow Colorado citizens, please stand up for Jack Phillips and for our right to freely exercise our religion. Religious liberty is a fundamental right that everyone on both the political left and right should fight to protect. Call John Suthers (720-508-6000), John Hickenlooper (303-866-2471), and your legislators today and tell them to immediately end this persecution and let them know that Coloradoans *will* fight for religious liberty.