



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Speaker J.D. Mesnard (R-17)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Speaker Mesnard Applauds U.S. Supreme Court for Upholding the Free Exercise of Religion

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – House Speaker J.D. Mesnard today applauded the [U.S. Supreme Court's decision in favor of Trinity Lutheran Church](#) in a landmark case questioning the exclusion of churches from otherwise secular non-profit aid programs.

The Trinity Lutheran Child Learning Center, a licensed preschool and daycare in Missouri and a ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church, applied for the state's [Scrap Tire Grant Program](#) to seek access to recycled tires to resurface their playgrounds. This grant program was enacted by the Missouri General Assembly and established a 50-cent scrap tire fee collected on the sale of new tires to fund various projects.

Despite submitting one of the highest ranked applications, Trinity Lutheran Church was subsequently denied a grant, solely due to the fact it was a church. The Missouri government's denial cited a constitutional provision prohibiting public funds from funding religious purposes. Today's Supreme Court decision decisively prohibits such unfair treatment.

"Today is a huge victory for the First Amendment and the Free Exercise of Religion," said Speaker Mesnard. **"The court has ensured government cannot discriminate against organizations simply because they are religious, while also reinforcing, rather than undermining, the Establishment Clause. The Trinity Lutheran decision will have profound and positive implications for years to come for religious groups and institutions interacting with government."**

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