

June 20, 2019

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Attorney General Steve Marshall Praises U.S. Supreme Court Decision Declaring Cross on State Property Constitutional

(MONTGOMERY) – Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall praised a U.S. Supreme Court decision today upholding the constitutionality of a World War I memorial in the shape of a cross.

On Wednesday, the high court voted 7-2 that a 40-foot cross erected in 1925 to honor fallen World War I soldiers from a Maryland community does not violate the U.S. Constitution’s Establishment Clause.

“I applaud the Supreme Court’s strong ruling in *American Legion v. American Humanist Association* that a cross in a public memorial setting is not a violation of the Constitution’s prohibition on the government establishing an official religion,” said Attorney General Marshall.

“Alabama joined an [amicus brief](#) in support of the continued display of the ‘Peace Cross’ memorial in Bladensburg, Maryland, because many hundreds of similar public monuments and memorials across our land stand as both pillars of respect to the fallen and important symbols of our country’s history and traditions. As Justice Thomas noted in his concurrence, the American Humanist Association failed to demonstrate ‘that maintaining a religious display on public property shares any of the historical characteristics of an establishment of religion. . . . Instead, the [state’s park and planning] commission has done something that the founding generation, as well as the generation that ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, would have found commonplace: displaying a religious symbol on government property.’”

The Supreme Court’s decision today in the Maryland case should have a positive impact on a different case involving the City of Pensacola’s defense of its 78-year-old cross monument to World War II veterans, which faces a legal challenge similar to the one the Supreme Court just rejected.

In October 2018, Alabama led a 13-state [amicus brief](#) asking the Supreme Court to overturn two lower court rulings declaring the Pensacola monument unconstitutional. The Court is expected to consider the case in the coming weeks.

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“I am hopeful that the Court will agree with the people of Pensacola that their beloved cross memorial in Bayview Park must be protected,” said Attorney General Marshall.