

March 15, 2022

Ms. Katharine Kelleman 345 6th Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear Ms. Kelleman

I write to you today to raise your awareness of a dire issue: your organization is breaking the law and infringing on one of our member's civil rights. I'll explain.

As I'm sure you know, the laws of our land require you to treat all people the same, regardless of religious belief. This means that allowing or withholding special privileges to your employees based on religious belief, or the degree of belief, is religious discrimination and illegal.

Your organization is about to fire our "mildly-religious Catholic" member **John Busch** for noncompliance with your vaccine mandate, while very-religious non-compliers are being allowed to keep their jobs. Only the very-religious people are "religious enough" to be granted religious exemptions and keep their jobs; the less-religious are being fired.

This means someone on your staff is subjectively deciding who is religious "enough" to be granted an exemption and keep their job. That's religious discrimination, and it's illegal.

- Religious discrimination is expressly prohibited by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and the Civil Rights Act, and, because your organization is federally funded, this also constitutes a Church/State Separation and Equal Protection violation.
- Very-religious people are equally "safe" for your customers and other employees as less-religious people. We all know this. By allowing unvaccinated very-religious employees to interact with customers (implying no safety concern) but firing your unvaccinated less-religious employees out of concern for "other people's safety," you are, in no uncertain terms,both committing and hiding religious discrimination.
- By allowing only very-religious people to stay, you are effectively thinning the less-religious from your employment ranks. Whether or not this is by design, it will be the effect, and again, is neither moral nor legal; *neither you nor anyone on your staff is legally allowed to decide who is religious enough to keep their job*.



Ms. Kelleman, you must not fire Mr. Busch while others get to keep their jobs simply because they are "religious enough." Our member is willing to follow exactly the same procedures as his very-religious counterparts in order to keep his position with you; he does not want to lose his job.

The solution is simple: Implement a second, secular, "conscientiously held beliefs" exemption policy, open to people of all faith levels, in addition to the existing religious exemption policy. This will immediately rectify the problem and all avoid legal difficulties.

On that note, I also need to inform you that Atheists for Liberty is dedicated to this cause and our membership, and we will support his legal challenges against all interested parties should they damage his livelihood in this (very obviously) discriminatory manner.

As our member is scheduled to face a "disciplinary hearing" (again, not faced by very-religious people) in the next few days, we appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

David Silverman Atheists for Liberty

David Siegel, Attorney at Law

CC: James MacNeil jmacneil@portauthority.org Don Autore Donautore10@yahoo.com Ross V Nicotero <u>rnicotero.atu85@aol.com</u> Members of the press