

Liz Stevens

The Interaction Between the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the Constitution

**Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Orange County Chapter**

Saturday, August 20 at 2:00 pm

Irvine Ranch Water District¹ 15600 Sand Canyon Ave. (at Waterworks) in Irvine

Elizabeth Stevens is an associate attorney at Parravano Witten PC in Monterey, California. From 2008-2009, she served as a litigation fellow at Americans United for Separation of Church and State in Washington, DC, where she played a crucial role in seeing that Westphal v. Wagner, the local case challenging prayers at Saddleback College, was brought to court. Prior to her fellowship, she served as a law clerk to Chief Judge Royce Lamberth of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

Ms. Stevens graduated first in her class from California Western School of Law. Before earning her law degree, Ms. Stevens served as a naval cryptology officer in Pensacola, Florida, and San Diego, California.

What is the relationship between the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the first amendment? To what extent can the government accommodate religion without endorsing it?

As an example, Ms. Stevens will consider the proposed circumcision ban in San Francisco from a First Amendment perspective. At present, the proposed law does not include a religious exemption. Does it therefore violate the Free Exercise Clause? Regardless, would a religious exemption be permissible under the Establishment Clause?



¹ Irvine Ranch Water District neither supports nor endorses the cause nor activities of organizations which use the District's meeting rooms that are made available as a public service.