



ATTORNEY GENERAL

DEREK SCHMIDT

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AG Derek Schmidt: Lawsuit challenging Israel boycott statute dismissed, new statute to enter into force

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TOPEKA – (June 29, 2018) – A federal lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of a Kansas statute that prohibited the state from entering into certain contracts with individuals and companies that boycott Israel has been dismissed, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said today.


The federal lawsuit, filed in 2017 by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of a Kansas plaintiff, argued that the Kansas law violated the plaintiff's civil rights. The plaintiff obtained a preliminary injunction blocking the state law from entering into force.

Schmidt's office provided the legal defense of the state law, which in part involved working with the Legislature earlier this year to amend the statute so it was narrower in scope and more focused on its intended purpose. The Legislature adopted those amendments, which will become effective July 1. Based on that, the plaintiff agreed that the preliminary injunction should be dissolved and the lawsuit dismissed. The attorney general's office and the plaintiff today submitted to the federal court an agreed order of dismissal, with prejudice, which was signed this afternoon by District Judge Daniel Crabtree.

"Working with the Legislature and the governor, we have prevented this lawsuit from going forward and have eliminated the injunction so the new Kansas law can go into effect," Schmidt said. "We have successfully preserved the ability of the State of Kansas, through its lawmakers, to choose to stand in support of the State of Israel."

Because the plaintiff was successful in obtaining a preliminary injunction that ultimately contributed to the amendments to state law, the state was ordered to pay \$41,602.50 for her costs and attorneys fees.

The case is *Koontz v. Watson*, No. 17-CV-4099. A copy of the order of dismissal is available at <http://bit.ly/2Kuc5cL>.

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