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**ATTORNEY GENERAL SKRMETTI JOINS AMICUS BRIEF FILED WITH U.S. SUPREME COURT IN SUPPORT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

**Nashville-** Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti joined a coalition of 19 state attorneys general in filing an amicus brief asking the U.S. Supreme Court to hear *Gregory Tucker vs. Faith Bible Chapel International*, an important case involving the liberty of religious organizations to select their ministerial leaders.

The brief supports a faith-based Colorado school in arguing that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit misapplied the First Amendment doctrine known as the “ministerial exception” when it allowed a federal lawsuit filed by a former teacher and school chaplain to proceed against the school.

In June, a 2-1 panel vote of the Tenth Circuit held that the school could not appeal the district court’s decision, declining to apply the First Amendment. Several months later, the full appellate court refused by a 6-4 vote to overturn the district court’s decision. In opposing this decision, the dissenters wrote that the “stakes are exceptionally important for religious bodies deciding who to hire or fire.”

Similarly, today’s brief contends that the ministerial exception should be definitively ruled upon early in litigation by a court, and that the court’s decision should be immediately appealable. This protects religious organizations from improper and invasive inquiries into their leadership decisions, doctrines, and dogma.

“In short, Amici’s citizens should be free to choose religious ministers without fear of government meddling, and Amici States shouldn’t be required to meddle,” the brief states. “Because the Tenth Circuit’s opinion muddies First Amendment waters on jurisprudential questions of exceptional importance and threatens the constitutional rights of countless religious adherents and organizations, a grant of certiorari and eventual reversal are necessary.”

Click [here](#) to read the brief in its entirety.

General Skrmetti was joined in this effort by attorneys general from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia.

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