

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

P.O. BOX 750 • MADISON, WI 53701 • (608) 256-8900 • WWW.FFRF.ORG

December 17, 2015

**SENT VIA EMAIL AND U.S. MAIL:
sjccom@co.st-joseph.in.us**

County Commissioners
County-City Building
227 W. Jefferson Blvd.
South Bend, IN 46601

Re: Unattended display policy

Dear Board of Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation regarding St. Joseph County's policy for unattended displays in the County-City Building lobby. FFRF is a national nonprofit organization with 23,000 members across the country, including 350 members in Indiana. Our purpose is to protect the constitutional principle of separation between state and church.

It is our understanding that a nativity display, with a sign explaining the religious scene's history, is prominently displayed in the lobby of the County-City Building, easily visible from both inside the lobby and outside the building. We understand that the County has allowed this display to be erected by a private religious organization pursuant to a County policy.

If this is correct, FFRF is interested in erecting a display consisting of our own Bill of Rights "nativity" scene and an explanatory sign on behalf of our local membership. We request permission to erect the display in a similarly visible spot in the County-City Building lobby as early as Tuesday, December 22. We will plan on taking it down on Tuesday, January 5, 2016.

If you choose to deny our request, then please send us a copy of the written policy regarding the erection of unattended displays in the lobby of the City-County building that would support such a denial. If this can be sent electronically (preferred), please email the policy to ryan@ffrf.org. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Ryan D. Jayne, Esq.
Diane Uhl Legal Fellow
Freedom From Religion Foundation