

# FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

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**SENT VIA EMAIL & U.S. MAIL: [gjohnson@ci.port-neches.tx.us](mailto:gjohnson@ci.port-neches.tx.us)**

The Honorable Glenn Johnson  
Mayor of Port Neches  
P.O. Box 758  
Port Neches, TX 77651

Re: Display of Cross on Government Property

Dear Mayor Johnson:

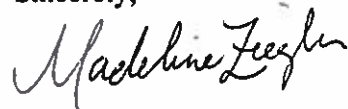
I am writing again on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) regarding the display of a Latin cross in Port Neches Riverfront Park. We have not received a response to our Nov. 5 letter informing you that this cross is unconstitutional and must be removed from the park.

Again, it is unlawful for Port Neches to display this patently religious symbol on public property. As we detailed in our original letter, courts have consistently and repeatedly held the display of Christian crosses on public property to be unconstitutional. Continuing to display this monument signals that the City of Port Neches prefers religion over nonreligion, and Christianity over all other faiths. "Permanent monuments displayed on public property typically represent government speech," which "must comport with the Establishment Clause." *Pleasant Grove City, Utah v. Summum*, 555 U.S. 460, 470, 468 (2009). "It certainly is not common for property owners to open up their property for the installation of permanent monuments that convey a message with which they do not wish to be associated." *Id.* at 471.

At a November rally in support of the cross, you seemed to find it important that very few Port Neches residents object to the cross. Contrary to your claim that there is a "right" to "majority rule," the Bill of Rights exists precisely to protect individual citizens from the tyranny of majority. As mayor, you serve all citizens of Port Neches, not just the Christian ones you personally agree with. You have a duty to remove this religious symbol from government property to protect the rights of non-Christians, who are made into political outsiders when their local government so strongly indicates that it favors a religion they do not belong to.

We still expect a response in writing regarding the steps the City of Port Neches is taking to address this serious matter. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Madeline Ziegler, Esq.  
*Cornelius Vanderbroek Legal Fellow*  
*Freedom From Religion Foundation*