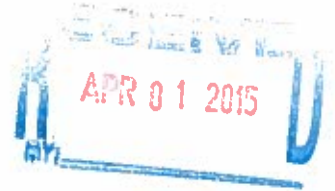




COUNTY OF LEHIGH
Department of Law

Matthew R. Sorrentino
County Solicitor

March 25, 2015



Patrick C. Elliott, Esq.
Freedom From Religion Foundation
P.O. Box 750
Madison, WI 53701

RE: Lehigh County Seal

Dear Mr. Elliott:

The Lehigh County Board of Commissioners has directed my office to respond to your letters of November 5, 2014 and January 16, 2015. In those letters you contend that the Lehigh County seal violates the Constitution because it has a Latin cross in its center, and therefore contravenes the Establishment Clause. You urged the County to discontinue using the seal and develop a new seal, and requested a written response outlining any steps the County would take to comply with your letter.

The Commissioners have made inquiries with the local Historical Society concerning the history and purpose of the various symbols on the County seal. If you have examined the seal in detail, you will have noted that it contains many different symbols and elements, each with historical significance to Lehigh County. The cross, one of more than a dozen elements, was included to honor the original settlers of Lehigh County who were Christian.

It is the position of Lehigh County that the presence of the cross on the seal among all the other items of historical significance has the secular purpose of recognizing the history of the County. As such, it does not violate the Establishment Clause. Accordingly, the County is not planning on removing the cross from the seal.

Very truly yours,


Matthew R. Sorrentino, Esq.
County Solicitor

MRS/CMR/jld

EXHIBIT

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Lehigh County Government Center
17 S. Seventh Street
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101-2401
Phone: 610-782-3180
Fax: 610-871-2796