

**ACLU****OREGON**Join Up
Volunteer
Act NowAMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
of OREGON

www.aclu-or.org • info@aclu-or.org • (503) 227-3186

**Statement by former Portland Adventist Academy
basketball player Andrew Montgomery
on behalf of the ACLU of Oregon**

March 12, 2007

After years of wrangling with the Oregon Board of Education and the Oregon School Activities Association over religious accommodation in the state basketball tournament, our case is now in the hands of the Oregon Supreme Court. My basketball career ended four years ago, so the outcome will have little effect on my life. It will, however, affect not only the next generation of basketball players at Portland Adventist Academy, but other religious minorities in Oregon and beyond.

In 2002, my junior year of high school, we asked the OSAA to delay our consolation game by about three hours, from Saturday afternoon until just after sundown on Saturday evening, so we could observe our Sabbath. The OSAA decided to “accommodate” us by giving us a choice: either forfeit the game or betray our religious convictions. Is it right to ask a young high school student to make such a difficult choice? I will never forget the sick feeling that accompanied our collective decision to forgo further participation in the tournament.

On the other hand, I will never forget the ACLU’s support of our team and the ACLU’s commitment to make sure that students never again have to choose between participation in athletics and their religious beliefs. Were it not for the continuing efforts of the ACLU – and (cooperating attorney) Charlie Hinkle’s brilliant legal arguments – this ongoing discrimination would have been forgotten long ago. I would like to thank everyone who supports the ACLU of Oregon with your time and money; your encouragement and assistance has strengthened my resolve to work to protect religious and civil liberties when I graduate from law school in a few years.

Andrew Montgomery
Senior, Pepperdine University

For updates on this case, visit www.aclu-or.org