

Telescope Media Group v. Lindsey

Significance: Whether the government can force creative professionals to promote messages that violate their core beliefs.

Next Legal Proceeding: U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit to announce decision following oral arguments Oct. 16, 2018.

Background: Carl and Angel Larsen own Telescope Media Group, a Minnesota-based video production company that exists to tell great stories that honor God. The Larsens work with all people; they just don't make films promoting all messages. The Larsens want to use their God-given talents and the storytelling power of film to promote their religious beliefs about marriage. But according to Minnesota officials, the state's Human Rights Act mandates that if the Larsens create films celebrating marriage between one man and one woman, they must also create films promoting views about marriage that violate their beliefs, including films promoting same-sex marriages. The State is threatening the Larsens with steep fines and up to 90 days in jail to force them to create films they don't want to create.



The Larsens have filed suit in federal court to protect their right to create art that is consistent with their beliefs.

What's at Stake?

- Carl and Angel work with all people; they just don't create films promoting all messages.
- People of faith should not be treated like second-class citizens.
- Creative professionals should be free to create art consistent with their convictions without the threat of government punishment.
- Americans have the right to challenge unjust laws. We don't have to wait to be punished or thrown in jail before we seek justice.

Analogies: Should the government have the power to punish...

- ...a Democratic speechwriter for not writing speeches promoting the Republican Party?
- ...a gay filmmaker for not creating a film promoting a church's views on marriage?
- ...a Muslim singer for not singing Christian hymns at a church's Easter service?
- ...a pro-abortion photographer for declining to photograph the March for Life?

The Bottom Line: The government shouldn't threaten filmmakers with fines and jail time to force them to create films that violate their beliefs.