

Victory in *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*

Experts share their support for the Supreme Court's decision to protect faith-affirming foster care

“When children and families are successfully matched, everyone wins. I believe the most effective foster care approach is a pluralist one in which groups with different philosophies and commitments can be there recruiting families and finding solutions for the hard placements. With children’s well-being at stake, purism should not become the enemy of program success.”

–**Walter Olson**

Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute’s Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies

“Today’s decision is a victory for the hundreds of thousands of kids in foster care. They need all hands on deck—families and agencies of all faiths and no faith to support them. The Court has recognized that we cannot let culture war battles stand in the way of providing homes for vulnerable children.”

–**Naomi Schaefer-Riley**

Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute specializing in adoption and child welfare

“Today’s landmark decision in *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* will protect vulnerable children’s profound interest in finding and forming families by ensuring that they will have access to more, not fewer, prospective adoptive parents.”

–**Tim Keller**

Senior Vice-President and Legal Director at Gen Justice

“I am grateful to the Supreme Court for upholding religious liberty. At a time when we are facing a shortage of foster homes, it’s imperative we have all hands on deck to combat this crisis. Today, the Supreme Court’s decision made that possible.”

–**Melissa Buck**

Foster and adoptive parent to 6 children

"Our country is celebrating a victory over racial injustice in Minneapolis even as we reckon with consequences of structural racism. Part of this reckoning ought to include support for the community organizations that help struggling black families. Catholic Social Services is an example of an organization that is directly lifting up black children and black families. Today's Supreme Court victory is their victory."

– Jacqueline C. Rivers, PhD

Executive Director of the Seymour Institute for Black Church and Policy Studies

"Today's Supreme Court decision in *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* is a win for religious freedom and for these vulnerable children in need of safe and loving homes. Families and children in crisis need more support, not less. And now we know that discrimination against faith-based agencies for holding to their deeply held religious and moral convictions is not only counter-productive, but strictly prohibited by the Court. This decision is a monumental win for religious liberty and our families."

– Congressman Robert Aderholt

United States Representative, Alabama

"This is a win for religious freedom and a win for children in need of families. Philadelphia should never have used the most vulnerable children as leverage to attempt to change the doctrinal beliefs of a religious institution. Some will falsely categorize the *Fulton* decision as discrimination when it is in fact the reverse. This majority opinion does not exclude anyone from serving — it simply ensures that religious people may continue serving, without submitting their theologies for City Council review. This is important for children since religious institutions are, and have always been, at the forefront of helping children in need of a home. Now that this ruling is delivered, we should work together, as Americans, to help the children in our foster care systems who need all of us on their side."

– Dr. Russell Moore

*Author, *Adopted for Life**

“The Supreme Court’s decision today is a great win for all children who are in need of a forever home. The staggering number of children in foster care demands an all hands on deck approach that allows for all people, no matter their religious beliefs, to open their homes and their hearts to a son or daughter who needs a family. The state should not require foster care agencies to compromise, violate, or abandon their religious beliefs or identities as a condition of serving these children in need.”

– Leigh Fitzpatrick Snead

Adoptive mother and Fellow for The Catholic Association

“This case is about children’s lives. Whether or not they can be in a home with love can change the trajectory of their lives. Catholic Social Services invests in the future of our nation by helping children and willing foster and adoptive parents. They make the impossible possible. The City’s rupture of the relationship this Catholic agency had with children and hospitable homes was unnecessary and cruel. May today’s decision be a game changer for religious liberty and children in foster care. We need more choices, not less. We have fundamental disagreements in the United States today, but we must work to live together. We must learn to protect and provide for the most vulnerable children, without them getting lost in adult arguments. Today’s win is a win for children, families, religious liberty, and pluralism.”

– Kathryn Jean Lopez

Senior Fellow, National Review Institute

“This decision is a victory not just for child welfare providers, but a victory for foster care children who are seeking loving homes. By blocking the City of Philadelphia’s attempt at forcing Catholic Charities to choose between their faith and closing, the Supreme Court has upheld the First Amendment’s guarantee of religious liberty.”

– Congressman Mike Kelly

United States Representative, Pennsylvania

"With more than 400,000 kids in foster care, we should be doing everything we can to support organizations that connect children in need with loving families.

Discriminating against faith-based foster care providers because of their beliefs is not only unconstitutional, it makes it harder to get more kids into the safe, stable homes they deserve. The Supreme Court's decision is a victory for religious liberty and for every child in the foster care system."

– Senator Roy Blunt

United States Senator, Missouri

"Today's Fulton decision is good news for children and families because we need a foster-care system that welcomes all who are qualified to serve all who are in need. The Supreme

Court is not preventing anyone from serving, rather it rightly found that Philadelphia's exclusion of Catholic Social Services because of their theological convictions was wrong. The state should not punish providers and families for their faith and doing so is not only unconstitutional but also undermines the very purpose of child-welfare work — to place children in safe, loving homes. Christians and the institutions formed from our churches are critical to the foundation of foster-care in this country. Children are best served when we all work together."

– Chelsea Patterson Sobolik

Policy Director, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission