FIRST AMENDMENT: ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER
• Can a public school encourage students to recite a prayer at the beginning of each school day? (Engel v. Vitale, 370 U.S. 421 (1962))


• Can a public school teach “creationism,” the idea that humans were created by a supernatural deity, along with or instead of the theory of evolution? (Epperson v. Arkansas, 393 U.S. 97 (1968), Edwards v. Aguillard, 482 U.S. 578 (1987))

• Can the government provide vouchers that parents can use to pay for their child’s education at private schools, including religious schools? (Zelman v. Simmons-Harris, 536 U.S. 639 (2002))

• Can a town council meeting begin with an openly sectarian prayer or invocation? (Town of Greece v. Galloway, 572 U.S. 565 (2014))

• Can the government put up Christmas decorations on public property? (County of Allegheny v. ACLU, 492 U.S. 573 (1989))

• Can the government provide for religious exemptions from generally applicable laws unless there is a compelling interest in denying the exemption? (City of Boerne v. Flores, 521 U.S. 507 (1997) (Stevens, J., concurring))


• Most states exempt churches and other religious organizations from property taxes. Does this violate the Establishment Clause? (Walz v. Tax Commissioner of the City of New York, 397 U.S. 664 (1970))