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## **ACLU-IA Applauds Supreme Court Ruling in Kentucky Ten Commandments Case - 6/27/2005**

by R. Ben Stone, Executive Director

### **Considers whether to file suit over identical Ten Commandments display in Iowa Capitol**

DES MOINES -- The American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa today applauded a Supreme Court ruling that Ten Commandments displays in two Kentucky courthouses are unconstitutional. The ruling came in a case brought by the ACLU of Kentucky involving displays virtually identical to one placed in the Iowa Statehouse 18 months ago.

"The Supreme Court's decision today reaffirms this nation's commitment to religious liberty," said Ben Stone, ACLU-IA executive director. "A majority of the court has clearly stated that the Ten Commandments represent an inherently religious document and that its display by the government for religious purposes is forbidden," said Stone.

The ACLU-IA claimed that the Court's ruling in the Kentucky cases is consistent with what the Court has ruled before. "Our Constitution's ban on government entanglement with religion is good for both government and religion. It keeps religion free, and it allows government to represent us all," added Stone.

In regard to whether the ACLU-IA planned to file a challenge to the Ten Commandments display at the Iowa Capitol, or other Iowa locations, the ACLU-IA's Stone said it was too early to know. However, today's ruling "makes challenges more likely," he said.

In a second decision today, the Court upheld a stone monument display of the Ten Commandments on the Texas statehouse grounds. However, no opinion commanded a majority of the Court. The critical fifth vote was provided by Justice Breyer, who acknowledged the religious message of the Ten Commandments but concluded that message was offset in Texas by the fact that the monument has stood on the statehouse grounds for 40 years without objection.