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## **ACLU of Iowa Asks Des Moines School Board to Abandon Motion to Censure**

by R. Ben Stone, Executive Director  
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**Des Moines** – The American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa today called on the DM School Board to abandon the idea of censuring one of its board members.

The following can be attributed to Ben Stone, Executive Director:

The ACLU of Iowa believes strongly that all persons, including government officials, have the right to express their views under the First Amendment. However, when a political majority uses a government body such as a school board to condemn a political minority, democracy suffers. It is for this reason that the ACLU generally disapproves of censure motions such as the one drafted for consideration by the Des Moines School Board.

In addition, the ACLU is particularly concerned by the conclusive nature of the claims made in the censure motion. Despite its call for further investigations, the motion does not merely accuse Mr. Narcisse of ethical lapses and wrongdoing, it states with certainty many factual issues, including that Mr. Narcisse has "intentionally misrepresented" information, "engaged in maladministration and/or the dereliction of duties of the office," and "made what he knew to be a baseless allegation" about the conduct of the board.

The Des Moines School Board is not an adjudicatory body. It is not a jury, and it is not composed of judges. It has no business publicly determining whether anyone on the face of the earth has violated anything. That is what state regulatory agencies and the judicial system are designed to do.

For the above reasons, the ACLU of Iowa respectfully requests that the Des Moines School Board abandon the idea of moving forward with any motion to censure anyone.