



WISCONSIN FAMILY ACTION
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One Wisconsin Now Owes Judge Hagedorn Public Apology for Religious Bias
Imposing religious test as qualification for public service violates U.S. Constitution

-MADISON, WI – In an attempt to discredit Brian Hagedorn, candidate for the Wisconsin Supreme Court, One Wisconsin Now yesterday declared Hagedorn “unfit to hold public office” because he co-founded a Christian school that seeks to follow orthodox Christian beliefs and standards.

“One Wisconsin Now owes Judge Hagedorn an apology for smearing his character and discriminating against him based on his religion,” said Julaine Appling, president of Wisconsin Family Action. “The U.S. Constitution simply doesn’t allow a religious litmus test for public office-holders and blacklisting candidates for public office because of their religious beliefs and associations is profoundly intolerant.

“Imposing a litmus test on individuals running for public office based on their faith is not only unconstitutional, it’s un-American. One Wisconsin Now appears to have taken a page from the playbook of those who have bullied and badgered other judicial candidates in recent months for their religious beliefs, and, most recently, Second Lady Karen Pence for teaching at a Christian school that similarly states its religious beliefs and establishes codes of conduct for employees and students. One Wisconsin Now certainly has a right to hold its own beliefs, but smearing a candidate with different beliefs is the very essence of intolerance. Such attempts should concern all Wisconsinites.”

One Wisconsin Now, bolstered by other activists, asserts that because the Christian school Hagedorn helped to found, and now serves as a board member, holds to an orthodox Christian teaching regarding marriage, Hagedorn is incapable of “fairly and impartially” judging cases.

“A judge’s job is to interpret the law as written, not to legislate or impose personal policy preferences from the bench. Judge Hagedorn should be vetted and reviewed based on his temperament and character as a judge—not on his personal religious beliefs, practices, or associations. For millennia, people of all the Abrahamic faiths and no faith at all have held the belief that marriage is between a man and a woman. Holding that belief, or being associated with institutions that hold that belief, doesn’t mean a judge can’t fairly and impartially interpret and apply the law,” Appling continued. “These tired tactics to discredit judicial candidates because of their faith’s beliefs have failed before, and they will fail again.”

Article VI of the U.S. Constitution clearly states that “no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.”

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Wisconsin Family Action is a statewide organization engaged in strengthening, preserving and promoting marriage, family, life and liberty in Wisconsin.