

September 12, 2015

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Christie A. Preston
Internal Revenue Service.

Ms. Preston:

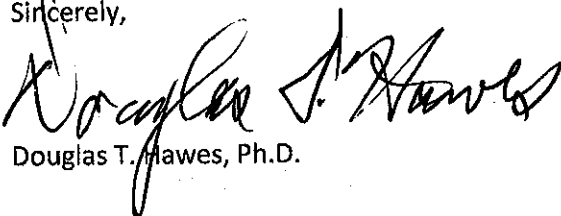
Belief in, and support of, a specific religion, or no religion, is optional under our Constitution. It orders that NO public funds SHALL be used to support ANY religion. Our government has flaunted this truism for way too many years, and in too many ways. Millions of dollars in tax reductions for religious organizations have moved a burden onto non-believers in an egregious manner. We cannot care how persuasive believers are, we cannot change the Constitution unilaterally, nor should we damage it so openly. No religious organization should be exempt from obligations we all share in supporting the public welfare. I would urge you to request from Congress the necessary funds to pursue ALL organizations which have the responsibility via their charters to render appropriate funds based upon the law.

On this last Thursday evening I gave a talk to a small group of fellow Secular Humanist on the Costs of Religion. My conclusion, below, should be your first step removing the growing burden on the growing numbers of unbelievers in this country.

Conclusion: It would seem to me that the time has come to slowly peel away religions institutions from at least some of their tax free status. We need to start with requiring them to fill out an IRS 990 financial disclosure form. This way the public will begin to see where and what for their donations to the religion of their choice are used.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,



Douglas T. Hawes, Ph.D.