

Baptist Briefs: Court rejects settlement of Baptist home lawsuit

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A federal appeals court threw out the 2013 settlement of a lawsuit challenging state funding of a Kentucky Baptist children's ministry, saying a judge should decide if court-ordered monitoring of alleged violations of the separation of church and state by [Sunrise Children's Services](#) is fair. A divided three-judge panel of the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled Oct. 6 that a lower court erred in allowing plaintiffs, including Baptist minister and former seminary professor Paul Simmons and the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to settle a dispute dating back to the 1998 firing of a lesbian employee by the Kentucky Baptist Convention entity then known as Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.

Baptist judge blocks Arkansas executions. An Arkansas judge who also is pastor of a Baptist church has halted the executions of eight death-row inmates, challenging a new law allowing the state to withhold information that could publicly identify the manufacturers and sellers of lethal-injection drugs. Pulaski County Circuit Judge Wendell Griffen issued a temporary restraining order Oct. 9 barring the state from carrying out eight executions scheduled recently by Gov. Asa Hutchinson, the first two set for Oct. 21. Griffen, pastor of [New Millennium Church in Little Rock, Ark.](#), said allowing the executions would cause "immediate and irreparable injury" to the inmates, who filed a lawsuit in June challenging both the Arkansas Act 1096 of 2015, the state's new lethal-injection law, and the lethal-injection protocol adopted by the Arkansas Department of Corrections.