

Oregon court upholds \$135K ruling against Christian bakers who refused to bake cake for gay wedding

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An Oregon Appeals court upheld a decision ordering Aaron and Melissa Klein to pay \$135K judgment for turning down making a wedding cake for a lesbian couple in 2013. (Image source: YouTube video screenshot)

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The Oregon Court of Appeals upheld a ruling against two bakery owners who refused to bake a wedding cake for a lesbian wedding in 2013 because it would go against their Christian beliefs.

The court did reverse one decision that said bakers Aaron and Melissa Klein violated state law by communicating their intent to discriminate against gay couples in the future, according to KGW-TV (<http://www.kgw.com/news/oregon-court-upholds-135000-fine-part-of-ruling-against-bakery-in-gay-wedding-cake-case/502964810>).

The case could next go to the Oregon Supreme Court, KGW reported.

A similar case, involving a Colorado bakery, went before the U.S. Supreme Court earlier this month, KGW said.

What's the story?

In 2013, Rachel Bowman-Cryer and Laurel Bowman-Cryer complained to the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, saying the Kleins, owners of Sweetcakes by Melissa, had refused to bake them a wedding cake because of their sexual orientation.

The Kleins said their objection to baking the cake was not because the couple was gay but because participating in a same-sex wedding would violate their closely held Christian beliefs.

A yearslong legal battle ensued.

In 2015, Aaron and Melissa Klein were ordered by Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries to pay a \$135,000 judgment to the lesbian couple.

The Kleins decided to fight back against the decision and filed an appeal. The money from the judgment has sat in an escrow account throughout the appeals process.

Attorney Jeremy Dys from First Liberty, who represents the Kleins, previously told TheBlaze (<http://www.theblaze.com/news/2016/04/26/christian-bakers-fight-back-after-being-forced-to-pay-nearly-137000-for-refusing-gay-wedding-cake-now-their-lawyer-reveals-his-5-major-arguments-against-the-govt>) that he hoped the Kleins would be victorious in affirming American business owners' rights to be "free to live their faith."

What has happened to the Kleins since this began?

The Kleins said they still receive threats against them.

"We still get emails every once in a while out of the blue that are just saying horrible things to us," [Melissa Klein](#) (<http://www.theblaze.com>)

</news/2016/02/25/christian-bakers-who-were-forced-to-pay-nearly-137000-for-refusing-to-make-gay-wedding-cake-describe-cryptic-threat-they-received>) told TheBlaze in a previous interview.

Their kids, too, have been impacted by the negative publicity. “It’s definitely had its toll on them,” [Aaron Klein](#) said. (<http://www.theblaze.com/news/2016/02/25/christian-bakers-who-were-forced-to-pay-nearly-137000-for-refusing-to-make-gay-wedding-cake-describe-cryptic-threat-they-received>) “We’ve tried to protect them as much as possible.”

They were also forced to shut down their Gresham bakery and now sell solely online.

Melissa Klein told TheBlaze she would like to open another storefront bakery one day but believes that would be almost impossible to do in Oregon.

What does the lesbian couple have to say about the latest decision?

KGW published (<http://www.kgw.com/news/oregon-court-upholds-135000-fine-part-of-ruling-against-bakery-in-gay-wedding-cake-case/502964810>) a statement released by Rachel and Laurel Bowman-Cryer following the appeals court decision that reads, in part:

All Oregonians can go into any store and expect to be treated just like any other person. It does not matter how you were born or who you love. All of us are equal under the law and should be treated equally. Oregon will not allow a “Straight Couples Only” sign to be hung in bakeries or other stores.