

Judge upholds law preventing guns in churches

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(RNS) A federal judge has dismissed a lawsuit by gun rights advocates who claimed a Georgia law prohibiting weapons in a house of worship was unconstitutional.

GeorgiaCarry.org, an organization that supports gun owners' rights, and two of its members filed suit against state officials saying the law placed an undue burden on them.

"The law at issue here ... does not prohibit anyone from attending services at a place of worship," ruled Judge Ashley Royal of the U.S. District Court in Macon, Ga.

The judge said any burden on worship attendance was "tangential" because the law requires that people not carry the weapon in services, leave it in their cars, or surrender it temporarily to security officers.

Jerry Henry, executive director of GeorgiaCarry.org, said his group is mulling whether to appeal the decision. "We are disappointed in the judge's interpretation," he said.

Henry said a bill was introduced Monday (Jan. 24) in the Georgia legislature that would remove houses of worship from the list of places

where carrying guns is considered illegal.