

Court rejects challenge to 'In God We Trust'

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WASHINGTON (RNS) Atheist Michael Newdow plans to continue his fight to get "In God We Trust" off U.S. currency after the Supreme Court denied a hearing in his case on Monday (March 7).

"I plan on bringing the lawsuit again on behalf of other Americans who believe they are injured when the government lends its power to one side of the controversy over whether or not God exists," he said Tuesday.

Newdow, a doctor in Sacramento, Calif., has filed numerous First Amendment suits concerning government endorsement of religion. He filed the challenge to the national motto in 2005.

A year ago, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against him, citing a 1970 decision that said the use of the motto on U.S. coins and bills is "of a patriotic or ceremonial character and bears no true resemblance to a governmental sponsorship of a religious exercise."

Newdow sought a rehearing of the case last April, but was denied in October. Two months after he asked the Supreme Court to review the decision, the case was dismissed without comment.

The Obama administration and the Pacific Justice Institute, a

Sacramento-based legal defense organization, argued against Newdow, saying court precedent called for the case to be dismissed.