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Last Sunday was the now famous Pulpit Freedom Sunday, a weekend where increasing numbers of pastors have set aside to preach on political issues over their pulpits in defiance of a law made in 1954 that prohibits tax-exempt religious groups from making any endorsement or opposition to a candidate running for public office. In Edmond, Oklahoma the pastor of Fairview Baptist Church, Rev. Paul Blair expressed his open support of gubernatorial candidate Mary Fallin while preaching his sermon.

This sparked off protests from Rev. Barry Lynn, Executive Director of the religious liberty watchdog group, Americans United for the Separation of Church and State who accused Rev. Blair of breaking federal law and has written an official letter to the IRS urging the agency to launch an investigation on him.

This is not the first time Rev. Blair had to deal with Rev. Lynn. In 2008, when Rev Blair then declared he would vote for Republican Presidential candidate John McCain, he was also duly reprovved by Rev Lynn. On another occasion, Rev. Blair's non-profit organization, Reclaiming Oklahoma for Christ distributed emails in June urging people to attend a political rally for Rep Sally Kern, who at that time was seeking reelection.

This also precipitated a similar complaint to the IRS filed by Rev. Lynn.

But Rev. Blair is unperturbed by Rev. Lynn's latest protest. Two years ago, he sent a copy of his sermon in which he endorsed McCain's candidacy to the IRS and has not heard from them since. The pastor insists he has done nothing illegal and feels the IRS' inaction lends credence to that. In fact, contrary to breaking the law, Rev. Blair feels he has done nothing more than exercise his constitutional right to freedom of speech.

With regards not paying taxes, Rev Blair said that churches have always been exempted from doing so and that this privilege was not something that came from the IRS.

But Rev Lynn countered by saying inaction by the IRS is merely due to the agency taking the trouble to make sure that all similar complaints are handled properly.

Besides asserting his rights to freedom of speech, Rev Blair defended his statements by saying his choice of governor is based on Ms Fallin's more pronounced stand on moral issues like abortion, the home and marriage as compared to her political rival, Jari Askins.

But Rev Lynn insists that Rev Blair knowingly made his statements in efforts to influence the voting of his 400 member congregation.