

DOJ threatens to take action against pandemic crackdowns on religious ceremonies

Barr is monitoring situation and action could occur next week, official says. Judge overturns Louisville ban on drive-in Easter celebrations.



Attorney General William P. Barr - (Barcroft Media / Getty Images)

The Justice Department signaled Saturday night it may intervene against local governments that are cracking down on religious ceremonies during the pandemic, warning that action could come as early as next week.

Justice Department spokeswoman Kerri Kupec used her Twitter account on the eve of Easter to announce that Attorney General William Barr was monitoring efforts to stop Easter religious ceremonies.

“During this sacred week for many Americans, AG Barr is monitoring govt regulation of religious services,” Kupec tweeted. “While social distancing policies are appropriate during this emergency, they must be applied evenhandedly & not

single out religious orgs. Expect action from DOJ next week!”

The statement comes as numerous municipalities across the country have been reportedly taking actions to stop churchgoers from celebrating Easter together, including in Louisville where the mayor threatened to track license plates and fine anyone who attends a public ceremony.

A federal judge Saturday actually blocked Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer from enforcing his ban on drive-in church services on Easter, calling it unconstitutional.

“An American mayor criminalized the communal celebration of Easter,” U.S. District Judge Justin Walker wrote while issuing a temporary restraining order. “That sentence is one that this Court never expected to see outside the pages of a dystopian novel, or perhaps the pages of The Onion.

“The Mayor’s decision is stunning. And it is, ‘beyond all reason,’ unconstitutional,” the judge added.

Source:

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