

Boivin campaign: applauds SCOTUS decision on Colorado baker but concerned it does not go far enough to protect religious liberty under the First Amendment

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June 7, 2018 – Brad Boivin, candidate for Wisconsin's 1st Congressional District, announced Monday on Twitter: "I applaud SCOTUS for ruling in favor of the Colorado baker," but he went on to say that he does not believe the ruling goes far enough to protect religious liberty.

When asked during a follow-up if his comments could be read as an endorsement of discrimination, Boivin said, "My belief is that the baker, Mr. Phillips, has a constitutional right to exercise his religious beliefs by refusing to explicitly or implicitly participate in a ceremony or ritual that violates his religious beliefs." Boivin went on to say, "It is my understanding that Mr. Phillips has not discriminated against patrons based on their sexual orientation in the past but in this particular case he was discriminating specifically against the ceremony, not the person or persons."

Boivin went on to explain that he would have made the cake if put in the same situation as Phillips but that he supports Phillips' right to not bake the cake based on constitutional grounds as outlined in the First Amendment.

When Boivin was asked if he thought Phillips, or those with similar beliefs in the district would vote for him given he has been out as a gay man since 1994, Boivin replied, "I think they would vote for someone who he has spent more than 20 years

defending religious liberty and who vows to take that fight to Washington. In many ways, religious liberty is under attack, specifically the religious liberties of Christians, and this concerns me greatly.”

Boivin went on to clarify that he does not believe that businesses have a right to refuse to provide general goods and services to patrons based on their sexual orientation but again reiterated that business owners have the constitutional right to exercise their religious beliefs “when the goods or services being requested by a patron require the business owner to knowingly and willfully violate their own religious beliefs.”

“I also have concerns that the ruling by the Supreme Court does not go far enough to protect religious liberty,” Boivin said. “Justice Kennedy’s majority opinion seems to focus more on the hostility of the Colorado Civil Rights Commission and less on the constitutional merits of Mr. Phillips’ case.”