

WASHINGTON- Most Americans will cheer today's ruling by the Supreme Court in refusing to support the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling banning the phrase "under God" from our Pledge of Allegiance.

However, it is disappointing the Court based its ruling on that case's connection with a child custody battle, rather than re-affirming the correctness of the phrase. It would have been far better to have acknowledged the phrase is accurate, appropriate, and in accord with the Constitution.

We can take great comfort, however, in the opinion of Chief Justice William Rehnquist, who said he agreed with the outcome and even wrote a separate opinion stating his belief the Pledge's reference to God does not violate the Constitution.

"The phrase 'under God' in the Pledge seems, as a historical matter, to sum up the attitude of the nation's leaders," Rehnquist said.

We also note another encouraging sign: Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Clarence Thomas concurred with today's decision. Justice Antonin Scalia, who did not participate in the case, has previously given a speech favoring to keep "under God" in the Pledge.

These Justice's actions represent evidence that they share the view of Chief Justice Rehnquist and a majority of Americans.

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