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New Orleans trustees approve
Leavell's retirement plans

By Greg Warner

NEW ORLEANS, La. (ABP) -- Landrum Leavell, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, will retire by the end of 1996 but leave the presidency to become chancellor at some point before then.

Leavell, 67, reached an agreement with the school's trustees to retire when he turns 70 in December 1996. The trustees unanimously approved the agreement during their March meeting, according to the board chairman, but no announcement was made.

Instead, a news release from the seminary reported that trustees passed a resolution praising Leavell "for his dynamic and creative leadership" during his 20-year tenure as president.

Chairman Ed Johnson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Ocala, Fla., said Leavell will move to the chancellor's post to assist the school in fund-raising. Leavell will choose when to make the move, Johnson said, adding, "He did not give us a time when he expected that to happen."

When the move is announced, a search committee can begin looking for Leavell's successor, Johnson said.

Leavell "did not feel any pressure from our board" to schedule his retirement, Johnson said.

Leavell agreed. "In fact, they had a committee talk with me (several years ago) and told me to think in terms of 70, then to go year by year," he said. "It's been real loose."

While other Baptist seminary presidents have had contentious relationships with their trustees, Leavell and New Orleans' board have been spared any major flare-ups over the years.

"There has been no pressure on me to compromise any conviction I've got," the president said.

The Southern Baptist Convention's six seminaries have been at the heart of the 15-year struggle for control of the denomination. Since conservatives gained the upper hand in the battle in 1979, they have been able to remove or

replace four of the six seminary presidents.

The recent firing of President Russell Dilday at Southwestern Seminary has raised questions about the security of the remaining two presidents -- at New Orleans and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

The Midwestern campus has been rife with rumors that trustees would try to fire or force the retirement of President Milton Ferguson, who has been at odds with his more conservative board members for several years. Both Ferguson, 65, and trustee chairman James Jones of Waterford, Mich., said they are unaware of any organized move against the president, however.

The Dilday firing may deter Ferguson's critics, seminary sources said. The SBC's conservatives, stung by charges of heavy-handedness in the Southwestern situation, will be reluctant to add fuel to the fire.

Some trustees expect Ferguson to offer his own plans for retirement to trustees when they meet April 18-19.

At New Orleans, both Leavell and Johnson said the school is trying to avoid the type of confrontation that has disrupted other seminaries.

"I think Dr. Leavell would like to see a good closure, and as chairman of trustees I want a good closure," Johnson said. "It is important to the school's finances, important to the faculty, important to the trustees."

"I would like New Orleans to be a model of good transition in these days," Johnson said.

Asked if a smooth transition was his objective, Leavell said, "You bet!"

As for Leavell's successor, Johnson said trustees will look for a president who is of "the same caliber as Dr. Leavell."

Unquestionably conservative, Leavell has not taken sides in the SBC controversy and his school has likewise avoided the spotlight. He has consistently called for Baptists to focus on evangelism and cooperation and not be distracted by denominational politics.

Leavell said he is not worried the trustees will choose a president who will steer the seminary on a radically different course. "I don't foresee them getting someone I can't work with."

If they do, however, it could affect his service as chancellor.

"I would not be a part of fund raising if they chose someone that did not represent the New Orleans spirit, but I would not withhold my personal support of the institution," he said.

Leavell said the success of the seminary's current three-city fund-raising campaign "probably depends on my being around."

Chairman Johnson said he expects Leavell to remain on good terms with the trustees and their new president, but added, "If a president was elected that he did not feel positive about, he would probably step away" from the chancellorship early.

Both Leavell and Johnson declined to speculate on possible successors. The potential candidate most often mentioned by conservative leaders is Richard Land, a New Orleans graduate and president of the SBC Christian Life Commission.

Asked if he could support Land, Leavell said, "I don't have any comment on any prospects." Johnson, asked if Land fits New Orleans' profile, said, "No comment."

Serving as chancellor could give Leavell a chance to influence the selection of a new president. "We would be very interested in his opinion," Johnson said, "but the selection committee would be a very autonomous committee. ... I don't think Dr. Leavell has any desire to handpick his successor."

Trustees' letter to churches defends firing of Dilday

By Bob Allen

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP) -- In an effort to get "the whole story" about the firing of seminary president Russell Dilday to Southern Baptists, trustee officers at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary planned to mail about 40,000 letters to pastors and directors of missions March 31, according to board chairman Ralph Pulley.

Initially, trustees were mum about their March 9 decision to fire Dilday, 63, president of the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary since 1978. Two subsequent statements were issued to news media.

The first, on March 11, said "irreconcilable differences" led to "gridlock" between Dilday and the board. A second statement, read to a group of Fort Worth-area pastors March 21, brought stronger criticism, accusing Dilday of mismanagement and insubordination and blaming the president's refusal to accept a retirement offer for negative publicity about the firing.

The most recent statement, a four-page letter signed by the board's chairman, vice chairman and secretary, is addressed to pastors of the estimated 38,741 churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and directors of missions for the approximately 1,200 local affiliations of churches called associations.

"We may expand that," said chairman Pulley, a Dallas attorney. Trustee leaders decided to write the letter, he said, to provide "the constituency out there, the pastors and the district missionaries" with "a little more detail" about positions of the trustees on issues related to the firing.

"The media, we understand, doesn't have room to print the entire story," Pulley said. Therefore, trustee leaders decided to make their case directly to Southern Baptists.

The letter, which was printed for free but cost the seminary \$11,000 for postage, encourages recipients to pass the information on to members of their churches.

The letter reiterates some arguments in previous statements and adds "some other observations," Pulley said.

It affirms that trustees "had no choice but to require a change in executive leadership."

It cites "irreconcilable philosophical differences that led to our action," illustrated by Dilday's invitation to Cooperative Baptist Fellowship leader Keith Parks to speak at the seminary's May commencement, disagreement over the type of training offered in the seminary's School of Church Music, and an administrative reorganization plan offered by Dilday which trustees found "unacceptable."

It also faults Dilday for an "unwillingness to cooperate" with the board, demonstrated by "repeated criticism" of SBC leaders and board members, failure to adhere to "directives" that he avoid political involvement in SBC life, and a relationship with trustees marked by "constant confrontation, both individually and collectively."

For the first time, the trustee leaders cited Dilday's 1982 book, *The Doctrine of Biblical Authority*, published by the Baptist Sunday School Board as a text for the church study course program.

In the book, Dilday, "using his high office in a denominational institution," takes sides in the debate over the nature of Scripture by shifting "the emphasis from the nature to the purpose of Scripture," the trustees wrote.

"Dr. Dilday demonstrates a commitment to the principles of higher

criticism, which spawned theological liberalism (modernism), neo-orthodoxy, the death of God, situational ethics, etc. From a decidedly biased position, Dr. Dilday is dedicated to berate, misrepresent and assail those who hold the Bible to be God's inerrant, infallible and authoritative Word," the letter says.

Contacted for reaction, Dilday said the criticism is "an absolute misreading of my book."

"I don't see how anyone reading the book could draw these conclusions," he said. "My total commitment has been, is and will be that the Bible is the inerrant, infallible and authoritative word of God. It is that philosophy I have used in accepting faculty for recommendation and to which the curriculum of our school is committed."

Dilday disputed the officers' letter at several points. "I am appalled and stunned by the inaccuracy and misrepresentations and untruths in this letter from some of the leaders of the board of trustees," he said.

For example, Dilday said, the \$400,000 retirement package he rejected -- described in the letter as "a golden parachute" and "a gesture of Christian compassion and grace" -- was offered "not in Christian compassion and grace but in a very confrontational spirit which was more of a buy-off and almost a bribe."

"I could not in good faith accept it," he said.

Dilday also said the invitation to Keith Parks, extended when Parks was president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, was not a factor in his firing. Trustees were not aware Parks was scheduled until Dilday's report at the March 7-9 trustee meeting. But he said he has documentation that trustees planned before the meeting began to force him to retire.

The trustee letter said the invitation to Parks violated "clearly stated policies." Dilday said the first such policy was adopted by trustees at the last meeting.

Dilday said trustee concerns about the music school were addressed and that the proposed administrative reorganization was not rejected by trustees, but only deferred for later action. Its intent was to reduce administrative costs \$200,000 to \$300,000 and balance the staff size to declining enrollment, a major trustee concern. The only complaints offered about the plan at the board meeting was trustees had not had adequate time to study it, he said.

Dilday admitted he was vocal about SBC politics early in the 15-year controversy between moderates and conservatives, but not since a 1989 agreement with trustees that neither he nor board members would participate in "anything that might be perceived as being political," he said.

The letter says the majority of trustees felt Dilday was "strongly sympathetic to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship agenda in direct opposition to the SBC."

Dilday said he has publicly "indicated the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was not the way forward for Southern Baptists." He has advocated reaching out to disillusioned Baptists, but "I have taken no action other than total commitment to the Cooperative Program and the SBC," he said.

The trustee letter denies "the rumor" that Dilday had been given a positive annual performance review the day before his firing. That statement "is simply a misstatement of fact or it is (Dilday's) own interpretation of what happened," the letter says.

"In fact, the committee challenged his actions and attitudes. This has been the case for the previous two years," he letter says.

While trustees did ask questions about faculty members and some of his personal views, Dilday said, "on all 10 of the criteria on which the president is to be appraised, they had no criticism and in fact used the

words 'You are doing a marvelous job in these areas.'

The appraisal would have been the appropriate forum for a recommendation to dismiss the president to surface, Dilday said. He said he brought up rumors that he was going to be fired and trustees "denied them."

Chairman Pulley said he "would expect Dr. Dilday not to agree" with the trustee leaders' statement. But, he said, the letter "certainly is accurate or we wouldn't have signed it or sent it out."

Pulley said he disagrees with Dilday's criticism of the letter, but "I don't care to get into any exchange with Dr. Dilday in the media."

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Provost William Tolar named
acting Southwestern president

By Toby Druin and Greg Warner

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP) -- Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary appointed Provost William Tolar as acting president March 29, temporarily filling the void left by the firing of President Russell Dilday.

But, Tolar emphasized, "my acceptance of these responsibilities does not mean that I concur with the action of dismissing Dr. Dilday nor the manner in which it was done."

Tolar said he made that clear when he told trustee chairman Ralph Pulley of Dallas he would accept the temporary position. "I told him this would be important to me for my conscience's sake, and he found no problem with that at all."

Southwestern's three deans endorsed the choice of Tolar as acting president, but likewise reiterated their earlier statement disapproving of the Dilday firing and the way it was handled.

Trustees abruptly fired Dilday without warning March 9, immediately changing the locks on his office and his computer access code. Trustee leaders at first declined to state their reasons for the firing and then later accused Dilday of mismanagement and insubordination, charges which Dilday and his supporters say are false and contrived.

The episode sparked an outcry from students, faculty, alumni, donors and one accrediting agency.

Two trustee leaders conceded March 29 that some of the board's actions after the firing were excessive. If they had it to do over, the pair said, they would still fire Dilday but would handle it differently.

Those second thoughts, meanwhile, convinced one trustee who has been critical of the firing to drop his call for an SBC investigation of the affair and for Dilday's reinstatement. Dallas pastor Wayne Allen said Pulley and the other trustee officers apologized "for leaving the impression it was a mean-spirited political takeover."

Allen said he met March 29 with six trustees who had voted to fire Dilday. After that meeting, Allen said he still disagrees with the action, but that asking the SBC Executive Committee to investigate would "only bring greater damage to the seminary, to the SBC and the Kingdom's work."

Tolar called Dilday "a cherished friend of 46 years and a great leader." "It would please me beyond all words," he added, "if a reconciliation could be made between him and the board of trustees."

But most, including Pulley, have ruled out that option. "You can't go back," Pulley said March 25.

Tolar's appointment was announced March 29 at a news conference in the

Truett Conference Room, the same room where trustees dismissed Dilday three weeks earlier.

Tolar, 65, has been a professor and/or administrator at the Fort Worth, Texas, school since 1965. A distinguished professor of biblical backgrounds, he was appointed dean of the School of Theology in 1981 and became vice president for academic affairs and provost in 1990.

A native of Jonesboro, La., Tolar has led a group of seminary vice presidents that has directed the school's day-to-day operation since the firing. He said he was encouraged to accept the acting presidency by fellow faculty members and administrators when it became clear the trustees would look to someone in the seminary administration for the assignment.

At the press conference, trustee vice chairman Lee Weaver of Fort Worth introduced Tolar as an "outstanding professor, preacher and administrator," whom the trustees felt "all who love Southwestern Seminary can look to ... with respect."

Weaver said the trustee executive committee, which made the selection of Tolar, did not consider anyone else.

Chairman Pulley, who did not attend the news conference, described Tolar in a seminary press release as "a man of impeccable character." "... His stability and expertise will move the seminary in the right direction."

Dilday, contacted one day after the appointment, welcomed Tolar's selection as an "informal" endorsement of the direction in which Dilday and other administrators had led the seminary.

"Actually, Bill Tolar has been a part of the recommendation of every faculty member and joined the president in recommendations to the board," Dilday said. "That is very affirming to me for them to name someone who would continue that philosophy and approach."

Dilday questioned whether an acting president was necessary since Tolar was already leading the group of vice presidents directing the school. But he added Tolar is "the very best choice."

The statement of the three deans, issued on behalf of the faculty, staff and administration, said Tolar is "the best person to lead the seminary now through these troubled days."

"Dr. Tolar has been a trusted senior colleague and administrator at Southwestern for nearly 30 years, and especially in the grave situation of recent days, he has acted with wisdom, poise and integrity," the statement said.

Tolar, who has served as interim pastor for many congregations, said he will approach the acting presidency the same way, trying to be helpful during a transition time.

He said his immediate goals will be to focus on the internal affairs of the seminary, preserving a "meaningful experience" for the students during the rest of this semester and bolstering faculty morale.

Tolar said he wants to affirm the faculty and show them that "hopefully we can and will continue to have academic freedom, which a lot of reports have questioned."

"I am committed to it as an academic person and cannot continue in my present position if I feel academic freedom is threatened," he said.

He said if possible he will speak to the seminary's financial contributors and urge them to continue their support.

"Regardless of how they see a beloved president has been treated, I will try to help them see that (cutting off their funds) would be depriving students."

A search committee headed by Fort Worth pastor Miles Seaborn is seeking Dilday's successor. Tolar, noting administration is not his primary calling, said: "I hope and pray the trustees will move as quickly as they can. I

assume it will not be a long-tenured thing."

Tolar holds a bachelor's and master's degree from Baylor University, where he taught for 10 years, and a doctorate in theology from Southwestern. He was pastor of three Texas churches.

He is married to the former Floye Kimball. The couple has two grown children.

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'Business-world protocol'
prompted Dilday lockout

By Toby Druin

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP) -- The much-maligned decision to change the locks in Russell Dilday's office and erase his computer access code the day he was fired as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary reflected business-world protocol and was overly cautious, a trustee leader admitted March 29.

If trustees had it to do over, they might have behaved differently, perhaps sending someone with Dilday to his office to collect his personal belongings rather than locking him out, said Miles Seaborn, chairman of a search committee seeking Dilday's successor.

Seaborn, pastor of Birchman Baptist Church in Fort Worth, and Lee Weaver, also a member at Birchman and newly elected trustee vice chairman, answered questions about the events of the March 9 firing in an interview March 29. The pair were at the seminary to participate in a press conference introducing William Tolar as the seminary's acting president.

Seaborn said trustees did not actually lock Dilday out of his office but merely limited his access to the office as a business precaution. "It was done according to protocol of the business world," he said.

Changing the locks and computer code were not meant to belittle Dilday or "rub salt into the wounds," Seaborn said. "But we didn't know what all he had access to through the computer. He is a computer whiz.

"We were not trying to limit (access) to his personal records. We were just saying there are certain things at this time that need to be sacrosanct, sacred, to the institution. It was not meant to be malicious."

Weaver said changing the locks was "not a reflection on anyone personally. We didn't know what to expect."

The two trustees noted that 200 to 300 students were crowded around the entrances of the room where the trustees were meeting. Weaver also noted that a similar crowd had gathered in 1989 when it was rumored that Dilday would be dismissed, and the trustees were uncertain what might result when the firing was announced.

Seaborn said the action was taken "as much for Dilday's benefit as for anyone else. Who knows, with all these kids around here, that somebody could have walked in and taken a souvenir?"

"When we look back," he said, "all of us think it might have been overcaution on our part, an overabundance of caution. But misguided as it might have been, it was for his (Dilday's) protection," he said.

John Earl Seelig, a former seminary vice president hired by trustees March 9 as a public relations consultant, said he had been asked at a Lions Club meeting what all the fuss was about in changing the locks on the president's office.

"Several business executives said, 'What is the big deal? It happens in businesses all the time,'" said Seelig.

Seelig also took issue with reports that the firing has cost the seminary \$15-20 million in gifts and pledges. Spokesmen for the Southwestern Council, who cited those amounts in a memo to news media, must have been thinking of people who said they were planning to give, Seelig said.

"The seminary didn't know they were planning to give," said Seelig, who noted that only \$2 million in cash and about \$5 million in pledges had been committed to the seminary's current Vision for Excellence campaign.

Contacted by Associated Baptist Press, John McNaughton, chairman of the Southwestern Council, said his estimate was "based on statements that have been made to us by people who have either committed or have set up in their wills or whatever to make contributions," but who have changed their minds because of Dilday's firing.

"The main thing to consider is not how much, but the direction of what is happening," McNaughton said. "People who were planning to make substantial gifts are not going to do that."

Seelig "knows who the big givers are," McNaughton said. If he has some question about the McNaughton's estimate, "all he has to do is call them."

"He's working for the people that have taken over the seminary, as far as I'm concerned," McNaughton said. "It's to their advantage to make it look like everything is going to be all right. I don't think it's going to be all right, from what I hear."

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-- Bob Allen contributed to this story.

Trustee critic drops call
for investigation of firing

By Bob Allen

CARROLLTON, Texas (ABP) -- An outspoken critic of the March 9 firing of seminary president Russell Dilday has dropped his call for a Southern Baptist Convention investigation into the matter.

Wayne Allen, one of the seven trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary who reportedly voted against the decision to fire Dilday, said a long meeting with trustee leaders March 29 convinced him an independent investigation would do more harm than good.

Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church of Carrollton, Texas, is a staunch conservative but differed sharply with the 26 trustees who voted to fire Dilday in executive session after the 63-year-old president rejected an offer to retire immediately.

Allen said he was "devastated" by the way the board treated Dilday, labeling it "un-Christian."

Later, when trustee leaders issued a statement accusing Dilday of mismanagement and insubordination, Allen protested. "This is nothing more than a cover-up," he said, and announced he would ask the SBC Executive Committee to investigate the firing.

However, following a three-hour meeting with six trustees who voted to fire Dilday -- including the board's chairman, vice chairman and secretary -- Allen said he was persuaded the board's decision was motivated by conviction and not politics.

Allen said he still disagrees with trustee leaders about the decision to fire Dilday and the manner in which it was done, but he believes "the intent of their heart was sincere, and that is of utmost importance to me."

Allen said the trustee representatives "apologized to me for leaving the impression, because of the manner in which it (the firing) was carried out, that it was a mean-spirited, political takeover." Allen said he accepted their apology.

The trustees told him they intend to "make some kind of public apology to thousands of Southern Baptists who had the same impression that I had," Allen said.

Allen said because of the discussion, he changed his mind about pressing for an SBC investigation. "I do not believe such would accomplish any lasting good and would only bring greater damage to the seminary, to the SBC and the Kingdom's work," he said in a statement.

Allen conceded his personal desire that Dilday be reinstated as president of Southwestern "does not seem realistic." He said he now wants to "build on the tremendous foundation established by 16 faithful years of service by Dr. Russell and Betty Dilday."

Allen said he reacted so strongly to the Dilday firing because he has a strong commitment to unity in the Southern Baptist Convention. Last year he ran for president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, he said, hoping his election would bring unity. Branded as a fundamentalist candidate, however, and nominated against a "very fine and dedicated Christian," Allen was soundly defeated.

"I accepted that without any ill feelings," Allen said. But when he got the impression that the method of Dilday's firing "indicated a political and mean-spirited takeover, I was totally devastated," he said. "I could not refrain from speaking out."

But, following his meeting with trustee leaders, "I am convinced this was not the case and therefore can once again begin building a trust in our denomination," he said.

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Supreme Court hearing
all but ignores Lemon test

By Pam Parry

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- If the U.S. Supreme Court is about to change its stance requiring governmental neutrality toward religion, the justices weren't tipping their hands March 30 as they heard oral arguments in their only significant church-state case this term.

At issue in the case Board of Education of Kiryas Joel Village School District vs. Grumet is whether the New York legislature violated the establishment clause of the First Amendment by creating a separate public school district for handicapped children living in a community of Hasidic Jews.

A larger question before the court was whether it would abandon its long-held but much-criticized Lemon test for assuring church-state separation.

Lemon requires governmental actions to have a secular purpose, neither advance nor inhibit religion and avoid excessive entanglement between religion and government.

But surprisingly, the Lemon standard was barely mentioned during arguments.

"The utter absence of questions about Lemon is probably a good sign, but not necessarily," said Brent Walker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee, which supports the Lemon test. "It may mean they have already made

up their minds."

"My best guess is we have at least five, maybe six, votes to uphold Lemon's essential core," Walker said.

Although Lemon was barely mentioned, Walker said, that doesn't mean the nine justices are not interested in the case. "Every justice, except for Justice (Clarence) Thomas, asked a lot of questions," he said. "They are obviously intrigued by this case."

The one-hour argument was devoted to questions and answers about the background facts and application of First Amendment law.

The New York legislature created the special school district encompassing the all-Hasidic village of Kiryas Joel in Orange County to resolve a conflict over providing special education services to disabled students in the village.

Hasidic Jews, who practice an insular lifestyle, found the Monroe-Woodbury Central School District's policy of providing special education services in public schools unsatisfactory.

The state supreme court said creating the district violated Lemon by advancing religion, since the special services were available to disabled Hasidic students in the pre-existing public schools.

Nathan Lewin, representing the school board, said that the district did not unconstitutionally advance religion because the state created the entity as a secular solution to a local problem. The motivation was secular, not religious, in nature, he said.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor responded that she was troubled by Lewin's suggestion that a narrow law that does not extend to all New Yorkers is somehow neutral.

Justice David Souter asked Lewin if the community was established for religious reasons. Lewin responded that the village was founded out of a "zoning dispute" and that all the residents "happen to be" part of one religion.

Julie Mereson, assistant attorney general of New York, told justices that the state action "tolerated" rather than "advanced" religion. Justice John Paul Stevens asked her if there was a real distinction.

Toleration is the recognition of differences and an accommodation to alleviate a burden on religious groups, not an advancement of religion, she said.

How is this neutral governmental action, O'Connor asked, if the state singled out one school district for special treatment?

New York was reacting to a particular local problem, Mereson responded. Such action seems to be a "dangerous precedent," countered O'Connor, who said a broader, generally applicable law might have been a better solution.

Jay Worona, arguing against the school district, told the justices the statute clearly violates the establishment clause because it set up "political constituents defined along religious lines."

Justice Antonin Scalia said that the district was created to solve a cultural, rather than a religious, problem.

Worona said by looking at the context in which the law was enacted that the action clearly violated the establishment clause on its face -- even without application of the Lemon test.

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission supports the existence of the school district and wants the Supreme Court to use the case to abandon or modify the Lemon test.

"Critics would use the Lemon test to deny these handicapped children an appropriate school within their municipality just because the children and their parents are religious," said Michael Whitehead, CLC general counsel. "This case is a perfect example of how sour the results of the Lemon test can

be."

The Lemon test makes the First Amendment hostile to Hasidic Jews and fosters discrimination based on their religion.

"Several justices noted that the purpose of the New York legislature and (Gov.) Mario Cuomo was to help disabled children, not to help religion," Whitehead said. "The law is religion-neutral and responded to the secular needs of these children by providing a secular public school within the friendly setting of the municipality."

The BJC's Walker, unwilling to predict the outcome of the case, said he hopes justices will not overturn or water-down the requirement that government remain neutral in matters of religion.

"As a lawyer, I know that church-state separation is good for government," he said. "As a Baptist minister, I know that it is good for religion too."

"Government is uniquely ill-suited to get into the religion business. And, religion has flourished in this country precisely because it is has been freed from government regulation and support."

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