

## Former Moore County Magistrate Sues State Over Requirement To Marry Same-Sex Couples

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - Former Moore County magistrate Charlie Smoak wants a judge to rule unconstitutional a requirement by the state's Administrative Office of the Courts that magistrates preside over gay marriages even if it violates their religious beliefs.

Smoak filed his lawsuit in Wake County this week. He is joined in the lawsuit by &quot;Jane Doe,&quot; who is identified as a current magistrate who wants anonymity because she fears losing her job.

Smoak, a Christian, was a Moore County magistrate for a decade but was not reappointed last year. The suit says he thinks it is because he opposes gay marriage. Smoak wants his job back.

Meantime, a bill to allow magistrates and registers of deeds to opt out of gay marriages for &quot;sincerely held religious objection&quot; has been filed by Senate Leader Phil Berger of Rockingham County.