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California-Atheist Michael Newdow Renews Assault on  
Pledge of Allegiance

Washington - Michael Newdow's new federal lawsuit seeking to outlaw the recitation of the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance is another effort to prevent freedom of speech by an activist judiciary, U.S. Rep. Todd Akin (R-MO) said today.

Akin is author of the Pledge Protection Act which was passed by the House of Representatives in the final days of the 108th Congress. Exercising Article III of the Constitution, the Act protects the Pledge of Allegiance by removing the jurisdiction of the federal courts the question of the Pledge's constitutionality. The bill did not receive a Senate vote.

"Until Congress acts decisively, the right of children to voice their allegiance to God and country by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance will continue to be jeopardized by fringe groups and an activist judiciary," said Akin. "This is a disturbing effort to stifle the right of the children of our country to echo a commitment to what the Declaration of Independence calls 'a firm reliance on Divine Providence,' and must not be allowed to stand."

Newdow won his case in federal court June 26, 2002. His argument was that it was unconstitutional to recite the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools. Although winning before the appeals court, the case was eventually dismissed by the U.S. Supreme Court because Mr. Newdow did not have custody of his young daughter whom he had claimed was being injured by listening to the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

To circumvent his lack of standing Newdow has joined with eight others who are either parents or children claiming to be damaged by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

"These turn of events are not surprising and is what the Pledge Protection Act was designed to defend against," stated Akin. "I will be re-filing the Pledge Protection Act this session."