

LAW OFFICE OF

MARK COHEN, P.C.



***"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."* 1st Amendment of the Bill of Rights**

Pretty powerful stuff this first amendment to our constitution. It's packed. Congress can't establish a religion and to boot, you get to freely exercise your religious beliefs. But then there's the freedom of expression. You get free speech, press, and assembly (peacefully that is). And there's more: you get to petition government to redress your grievances. Now when was the last time you filed a petition to redress your grievances? But I digress.

Now remember, as I explained in my last newsletter, I am engaging in this process of re-acquainting people with our constitutional freedoms so that everyone becomes more sensitive to both their virtues and values. In this way, we are less likely to tolerate the abridgment of our freedoms by those politicians, judges, and private sector leaders who seek to do so. In other words, know your rights and stand up for them.

No country in the world has so openly embraced the freedom to practice one's religion more than the United States. It's ingrained in America's DNA. But there are limits. First, government cannot entangle itself in religious affairs, let alone "establish" a religion. Secondly, "freedom of religion" does *not* mean that one religious group can impose their religious beliefs on others. For example, celebrating the birth of Christ in public schools during Christmas is not permitted precisely because it amounts to an imposition of the religious beliefs of one group on all others. That is, engaging in a religious celebration in a public school amounts to an "establishment" of religion by government and infringes on the free exercise of religion by others.

The right to speak your view, even when in decent, even when your sentiment is unpopular, is the bedrock of American freedoms. Freedom of speech and press is the lifeblood of Americans. The moment an opinion is stifled we lose our freedoms

as Americans. Americans live to debate, to disagree, and to learn from it. It's who we are.

A great example of freedom of speech is San Francisco 49'er quarterback Colin Kaepernick's refusal to stand for the national anthem. Kaepernick engaged in this expression of protest over how in his view, black people in America continue to be treated unfairly. Kaepernick's actions were initially very unpopular and soundly criticized from all sides. But that is what freedom of speech in America is all about. A person has a right to express him or herself even when such views are unpopular, even offensive. And as it turns out, Kaepernick's protest has caused many to discuss both his actions and the topic of his protest. That's America for you!

But freedom of speech does not mean that you can stifle others from expressing opposing views. If someone is expressing a point of view that you disagree with you do not have the right to disrupt that person's speech. Thanks to the 1st Amendment, Americans are expressive people who cherish the ability to say what's on their mind and practice their religion freely. But in both cases no one has a right to forcefully impose their views and their religion on others. It all works to make America great.

Now go out and practice your 1st amendment rights. And judge politicians, private sector leaders, and even judges by how much they cherish and advocate for the 1st amendment. Ask yourself: *'Are they for our bill of rights or against it?'*

PERSONAL  
INJURY



AREAS OF PRACTICE

ADMINISTRATIVE  
LAW



AREAS OF PRACTICE

LAND USE  
& ZONING



AREAS OF PRACTICE

CRIMINAL  
DEFENSE



AREAS OF PRACTICE

**In the next issue: The Second Amendment: *"A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."***

***You got questions? Got an idea for a topic? Let me know. I will see if I can write an article about it. "***



Visit my website: [www.markcohenlaw.com](http://www.markcohenlaw.com)

**Quotes of the Month:**

***"Arguing that you don't care about the right to privacy because you have nothing to hide is no different than saying you don't care about free speech because you have nothing to say."***

— [Edward Snowden](#)

**"Free speech means the right to shout 'theatre' in a crowded fire."**

— [Abbie Hoffman](#)

**"Before I speak, I have something important to say."**

---[Groucho Marx](#)

**Law Office of Mark Cohen, P.C. T: 510 792 4008 E: [mark@markcohenlaw.com](mailto:mark@markcohenlaw.com)**

(C) Copyright 2016, by the Law Office of Mark Cohen, P.C. All rights reserved.No reproduction of this article may be made without the express permission of its author.

Law Office of Mark Cohen, P.C. | 39510 Paseo Padre Parkway, , Suite 190, Fremont, CA 94538

[Unsubscribe](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by [mark@markcohenlaw.com](mailto:mark@markcohenlaw.com) in collaboration with



Try it free today