

Knights of Saint Columba

Accrington Council 188

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Source Christian Institute

A flight attendant who was sacked for her religious opposition to abortion has won her case for discrimination.

Charlene Carter was awarded \$5.1 million in damages after a US district court found her employer and union had treated the former flight attendant unfairly due to her Christian beliefs.

Southwest Airlines was told to pay \$4.15 million, and Local 556 branch of the Transport Workers Union (TWU) \$950,000, in punitive and compensatory damages to Carter for ‘unlawful discrimination’.

Religious rights

In 2017, Carter criticised Local 556 president Audrey Stone on social media for attending a march sponsored by US abortion giant Planned Parenthood.

When Stone reported Carter to the airline, she was summoned to a meeting with managers at which she explained why — on religious grounds — she objected to her union fees being used to fund TWU attendance at a pro-abortion rally.

Southwest claimed Carter’s behaviour amounted to harassment and sacked her a week later. Carter, with the help of National Right to Work (NRTW), launched legal action the same year.

Last month, the sitting jury at the Court for the Northern District of Texas said the airline and union had violated Carter’s religious rights.

Free speech

Welcoming the verdict, NRTW President Mark Mix said: “No American worker should have to fear termination, intimidation, or any other reprisal merely for speaking out against having their own money spent, purportedly in their name, to promote an agenda they find abhorrent.”

Carter responded: “Today is a victory for freedom of speech and religious beliefs. Flight attendants should have a voice and nobody should be able to retaliate against a flight attendant for engaging in protected speech against her union.”

In a Facebook post Carter thanked supporters for their prayers. She added: “I give Jesus all the glory for this win.”

Southwest said it intends to appeal the judgment.

Bernard Holden MBE JP

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