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## Pataki Vetoes 9/11 Custom Plate; Tries to Blame 'Choose Life' Lawsuit

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EASTCHESTER, New York, July 29 /[Christian Newswire](#)/ -- On July 28, articles in the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, Albany Times Union and The Journal News reported that Governor Pataki vetoed 15 custom plates, including the "September 11, 2001 Remembrance Plate" to the surprise of the lawmakers who passed the bills. Other custom plates vetoed by the Governor include the "Cure Childhood Cancer" plate, the "Westchester Way" plate to fund tourism in Westchester County, the "Kiwanis International" plate, the "10th Mountain Division of the United States Army" plate, and even the "Survivor of the Bravest" plate for family members of firefighters killed in the line of duty.

According to the Albany Times Union article, Pataki attempted to blame his custom plate vetoes on "a pro-adoption organization, The Children First Foundation in Eastchester, [who] is suing the state in federal court over an effort to get official 'Choose Life' plates." CFF's plate displays its "Choose Life" logo, the message FUND-ADOPTION.ORG across the bottom and will support Adoption and Safe Havens efforts in New York State.

Contrary to the statements made by Pataki in his written veto, the DMV has consistently used uniform criteria to approve over 300 diverse custom plates that range from political labor unions like the AFL-CIO to religious organizations like the Knights of Columbus. Equally troubling is a recent article in The Daily News stating that the charitable foundation run by the Attorney General and his family has donated over \$100,000 to NARAL since 2001. NARAL has opposed the issuance of "Choose Life" plates in other states and has endorsed the Attorney General's political campaign for Governor.

Back in August 2004, the DMV placed a moratorium on new custom plates in a transparent attempt to block the approval of the New York "Choose Life" license plate. Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) attorneys immediately filed a federal lawsuit against the Governor, the Attorney General and the DMV for violating CFF's freedom of speech and equal protection under the law. In March 2006, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals denied the state's Motion to Dismiss and did not grant qualified immunity to the state officials in their individual or official capacities. A trial date is pending.

"Every citizen, lawmaker, newspaper, talk radio station, and civil liberty organization should be as outraged as I am over this unprecedented attack upon the civil rights of so many important causes and organizations including our own," said Dr. Elizabeth Rex, CFF's President. "The Governor, the Attorney General and the DMV Commissioner are not above the law and they must defend the civil liberties of all New Yorkers, not just those they personally or politically favor," Rex added.

*The Children First Foundation promotes and supports Adoption and Safe Havens as positive choices for women with unwanted pregnancies or newborns. Please visit [www.fund-adoption.org](http://www.fund-adoption.org) or [www.choose-life.org](http://www.choose-life.org) for more information.*