



## FOOD FOR THE POOR

401 Lyons Road, Coconut Creek, FL 33073 • (954) 427-2222 • [www.FoodForThePoor.org](http://www.FoodForThePoor.org)

### Judge's Decision Negates \$1 Million Fine

A judge for the Superior Court of the state of California issued a statement of decision on March 18 that the Attorney General of California was wrong in issuing a cease and desist order on Food For The Poor, and called it an unconstitutional restraint on free speech. In confirming that FFTP's solicitations were not false or fraudulent or made with intention to deceive, the judge also declared unconstitutionally overbroad the provision in California's law that the Attorney General relied upon in pursuing its action against FFTP. The judge also negated the fine of \$1 million sought by the AG.

An earlier ruling confirmed that FFTP correctly valued donated goods, but this ruling did not dismiss the AG's claim of deceptive solicitations, an accusation fought fiercely by the charity. In 2018, when FFTP learned that its efficiency statement could be viewed as misleading, the charity immediately changed the efficiency statements to focus on impact and not percentages.

This ruling is the latest milestone in a years-long fight for the charity to clear its name after California wrongly issued a limited cease and desist order.

"It has been difficult for FFTP to have this accusation dangling over our head, especially when FFTP was not afforded due process before the accusations were made public by California," said FFTP President/CEO Ed Raine. "We are grateful to our donors for staying by our side so faithfully and continuing to do the important work of transforming lives. We would not have held out to fight, if we did not think it was the right thing to do."

The statement issued by the judge supported the charity's argument that the state of California violated the First Amendment rights of FFTP.

Raine said it is important to remember these things:

1. FFTP programs to serve the poor were not questioned.
2. There was no allegation of fraud or any misuse of charitable donations.
3. FFTP's registration to fundraise in California was not revoked.
4. The judge ruled in favor of the charity in its valuation of gifts-in-kind donations.
5. It was never the intention of the charity to be misleading. Though the percentage statements on its solicitations truthfully reflect FFTP's organizational efficiency, FFTP recognized right away that impact statements of the charity's use of donations is a better reflection of our donors' impact on programs that help those living in poverty and changed those accordingly.

We are grateful for your prayerful support during this time, and ask for your continued prayers as we seek God's guidance and blessings to continue together to do His work.