

JORDAN PRATT

Jordan Pratt, a longtime legal advocate for restricting access to reproductive and LGBTQ+ rights, often via the pretense of religious exemptions, has been nominated to a lifetime position on the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida. His record paints a troubling picture of a jurist who consistently elevates conservative ideology over established constitutional protections — particularly in the areas of bodily autonomy, LGBTQ+ equality, public health, and gun safety. If confirmed, he would have the power to impose these views from the federal bench for decades to come.

GENDER AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Pratt has made clear through his writings and legal opinions that he believes access to abortion should be even further limited, particularly for minors. He authored an opinion striking down a law that allowed minors to obtain abortions without parental consent in certain circumstances, a critical judicial bypass safeguard that protects young people — often survivors of abuse or neglect — from being forced to involve unsupportive or dangerous guardians in their reproductive decisions.

In a 2011 article, Pratt praised a Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling that denied a minor's request to bypass parental consent for an abortion, calling it a "win for pro-life advocates." He claimed that bypass laws had led to "secret teen abortions" and supported what he described as a national shift away from the idea that teenage girls are not "categorically mature" enough to access abortion care. Judicial bypass laws ensure that young people can safely and legally obtain care when involving a parent is not possible or safe. Pratt's disdain for this protection reveals a deep disregard for reproductive freedom and the difficult realities vulnerable minors face, ultimately putting their health and safety at risk.

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

Jordan Pratt has also used religious liberty as a tool to challenge public health protections, even during national emergencies.

He published an article supporting a lawsuit by First Liberty Institute that blocked COVID-19 vaccine mandates for Navy SEALs, arguing the mandate violated the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. He also represented a Massachusetts church that sought to overturn pandemic-era restrictions on indoor gatherings, claiming the limits were discriminatory against worship, despite overwhelming scientific consensus that such measures saved lives.

These efforts show that Pratt views even modest, temporary public health rules as unjustified intrusions on religious expression — an extreme stance that, if translated into federal jurisprudence, could dangerously constrain the government's ability to respond to future crises.

CHURCH AND STATE

From 2021 to 2023, Jordan Pratt worked at First Liberty Institute, a conservative legal group devoted to expanding religious privilege in public life, often at the expense of civil rights, equality, and the separation of church and state.

During his tenure, First Liberty was involved in several major Supreme Court cases:

- *Carson v. Makin*, where the Court required Maine to fund religious schools using public dollars;
- *Kennedy v. Bremerton*, which gave public school employees broad leeway to engage in prayer on the job; and
- *Groff v. DeJoy*, which made it significantly harder for employers to deny religious accommodations in the workplace.

In each of these cases, First Liberty — and by extension, Pratt — advocated for a legal framework where religious beliefs trump other public interests, from educational neutrality to employee and student rights.

Pratt would join a growing number of First Liberty acolytes appointed to the federal bench — among them, Matthew Kacsmaryk, the judge behind several extreme right-wing rulings. Kacsmaryk has led a sustained effort to restrict reproductive healthcare nationwide, including decisions that threatened access to mifepristone and ruled that protecting health information from law enforcement and other authorities was unlawful.

GUN VIOLENCE & THE SECOND AMENDMENT

Jordan Pratt has made clear that he views gun restrictions with skepticism — even in places where the stakes for public safety are especially high. This viewpoint directly places lives in danger.

In a law review article titled A First Amendment-Inspired Approach to Heller’s “Schools” and “Government Buildings,” Pratt argued that so-called “sensitive places” where firearms can be restricted should be interpreted narrowly. He advocated for expanding gun rights on public universities and federally controlled lands, undermining decades of precedent aimed at keeping students and communities safe.

More recently, Pratt challenged a New York law that prohibited guns in places of worship, representing His Tabernacle Family Church alongside the law firm Clement & Murphy. His advocacy sought to roll back commonsense limits on where firearms can be carried. With gun violence devastating communities across the country, Pratt’s record suggests he would work from the bench to erode lifesaving gun safety laws.

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LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

Jordan Pratt's record reflects a consistent effort to roll back the rights and dignity of LGBTQ+ individuals — particularly transgender people — often under the guise of religious liberty.

He represented a physician who refused to provide or even refer patients for gender-affirming care and objected to using transgender patients' preferred pronouns. When the physician was fired, Pratt claimed religious discrimination. In another case, he defended a manufacturing company that denied insurance coverage for gender-affirming care, arguing the employer was acting "consistent with its mission, faith, and the law."

Pratt's writing further reveals an ideological hostility to transgender rights. In an article titled [A Tale of Two Colleges: The Right Way \(and the Wrong Way\) to Handle the Gender Debate](#), he admonished Shawnee State University for supporting a transgender student's request that a professor use their correct pronouns. According to Pratt, the "right way" was to allow faculty to disregard students' gender identities if doing so aligned with their religious convictions.

From the courtroom to his commentary, Pratt is an anti-trans activist fighting to normalize discrimination against LGBTQ+ people by creating sweeping loopholes in civil rights law — posing a profound threat to equality under the law.