



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on November 7, 2012

## After Nearly a Decade, Roy Moore Regains Alabama Chief Justice Seat

[Roy Moore](#), the Christian constitutionalist judge who was unseated in 2003 as Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court after he refused to obey a federal court order to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the state's judicial building, was re-elected to the position November 6. Moore, who had spent the last year traveling the state to gain support, defeated Jefferson County Circuit Judge Bob Vance to win back his old job. "It's clear the people have voted to return me to the office of Chief Justice," said Moore as his victory was assured. "I have no doubt this is a vindication. I look forward to being the next Chief Justice."



In the early 1990s Moore became a target of the ACLU and other atheist groups when, as a county judge, he took to displaying a homemade Ten Commandments plaque in his courtroom, and insisted upon opening court with prayer. In 2000, after being elected Alabama Chief Justice, he had a 5,280-pound granite monument of the Ten Commandments placed in the lobby of the state judicial building in Montgomery, "to invoke the favor and guidance of Almighty God in establishing justice as provided in the Constitution of the State of Alabama," noted [Moore's campaign bio](#).

The ACLU promptly sued to have the monument removed, citing the First Amendment's supposed separation of church and state. In 2003, after he refused a federal judge's order to dismantle the display, arguing that the order itself was unlawful, Moore was removed from office.

In the ensuing years Moore ran twice for governor of his state, losing in the 2006 Republican primary to incumbent Governor Bob Riley, and finishing fourth in the 2010 GOP primary. In addition, for the past nine years Moore, a West Point graduate and Vietnam veteran, has served as president of the Alabama-based [Foundation for Moral Law](#), a conservative legal advocacy and education group.

During his campaign Moore promised that if re-elected to the Chief Justice post he would not try to re-install the monument in the state courthouse, saying that there are more crucial issues to address. "I would not return the Ten Commandments because it would be more about me or a monument about me," he said. "That's what I'm identified with and I think it would be detrimental to the true issue. The true issue is whether we can acknowledge the sovereignty of almighty God over the affairs of our state and our law. That I will not back down from. I will always acknowledge the sovereignty of God and I think we must."

In announcing his candidacy in November 2011, Moore said that "I have always upheld my oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and to uphold and support the Constitution of the State of Alabama. I look forward to once again serving the good people of the great State of Alabama, So Help Me God."

Political observers considered the comeback by the 65-year-old Moore, after nearly a decade out of the limelight, as nothing less than remarkable. Political scientist Bill Stewart told state news site [AL.com](#)



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that Moore was able to capitalize on name recognition and his connection to the Ten Commandments episode in a state whose citizens strongly embraced religious values. “He benefits from straight-ticket Republican voting and he benefits that Alabama is one of the most religiously oriented states in the country,” Stewart said.

One 70-year-old Alabama voter summed up that sentiment, telling the [Decatur Daily](#) that “I voted for Roy Moore because of his religious stand several years ago.”

Following his victory Judge Moore thanked God for the victory and the people of Alabama for re-electing him after so many years away from office. “I look forward to serving this state once again in the administration of justice,” he said. “The Alabama Unified Judicial System is a model for the nation and I am thankful for this opportunity.”

*Photo: Judge Roy Moore rides his horse with wife Kayla and friends back home after they voted on Nov. 6, 2012 in Gallant, Ala.: AP Images*



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