

Iowa taxpayers to pay anti-GMO activists \$50,000 to end First Amendment lawsuit

Iowa taxpayers will pay a \$50,000 settlement to end a lawsuit filed by anti-GMO activists who claim state officials violated their First Amendment rights.

The lawsuit was filed against the World Food Prize and state officials last year in light of limits Iowa placed upon demonstrators at an annual awards ceremony held at the Capitol.

Frank Cordaro, a peace activist and founder of the Catholic Worker in Des Moines, and other protesters have for years been confined to a sidewalk area that is about 110 yards from the Capitol's west entrance at the foot of a steep hill — a location that makes them largely invisible to World Food Prize participants.

Since 2012, the protesters have used a megaphone to amplify their voices but have been drowned out by musical ensembles and marching bands that World Food Prize organizers have commissioned to perform while dignitaries enter the Capitol to participate in the event.

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The protesters were generally expressing their concerns about the environment, biotechnology and the use of genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, in the fight to end world hunger.

During the 2016 ceremonies, Cordaro and Talen were arrested as they attempted to leave the designated protest area so they could approach the Capitol building and be seen and heard by event participants.

Read full, original post: [Iowa to pay anti-GMO protesters \\$50,000](#)