

Court Sides With Congress Over Acorn Funding Ban

Congress acted within its authority when it blocked federal funding last year for community activist group Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or Acorn, a federal appeals court ruled.

On Friday, the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a federal judge's ruling that cutting off Acorn's funding was unconstitutional. The judge had found that Congress had improperly passed a law that determines guilt and inflicts punishment without Acorn having the protections of a trial.

Lawmakers blocked funding to Acorn in a stop-gap spending bill last October and used identical language to specifically exclude funding to Acorn in the fiscal 2010 appropriations bill. The three-judge panel remanded the case back to a federal judge in Brooklyn for more proceedings—namely to determine whether Congress had violated Acorn's First Amendment rights or right to due process.

William Quigley, legal director for the Center for Constitutional Rights, which argued on behalf of Acorn, said they would ask the full circuit to hear the case.

Chad Bray

