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ACLU SUES OVER BUSHIT BUMPER STICKER

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The ACLU of Georgia filed suit today in federal district court challenging the citation of Dekalb County resident Denise Grier for a bumper sticker that said "I'm tired of all of the Bushit." Mrs. Grier was cited under a "lewd bumper sticker" law that had already been declared unconstitutional by the Georgia Supreme Court in 1991.

As Frank Derrickson, legal counsel and volunteer attorney for the ACLU of Georgia put it: "Sarcastic slogans directed against the power elites have been a key feature of our political debate in this country since its founding. Mrs. Grier's bumper sticker is just the latest example. This type of speech is exactly what the first amendment is designed to protect."

In March of this year, Denise Grier was driving home after a dinner with friends. She was stopped by a Dekalb County Police Officer, though she was obeying all traffic laws. The officer claimed Grier's bumper sticker was "lewd" and unlawful. However, the law he relied upon was declared unconstitutional in 1991 in the ACLU case of *Cunningham v. State* which involved another bumper sticker reading "Shit Happens." Grier's attempts to explain that her bumper stickers were protected speech, and political statements, fell on deaf ears. "It was outrageous! He pulled me over for his own political agenda, and grossly abused his authority in violating my free speech," said Grier.

While the criminal charges have now been dismissed, the threat of future prosecution continues. "This is a no brainer — core political speech case," said Gerry Weber, Legal Director of the Georgia ACLU, "but because officers are continuing to cite folks under the unconstitutional law, we needed to get the problem fixed once and for all." The lawsuit seeks damages, as well as a court injunction to deter future citations under the unconstitutional bumper sticker law. The lawsuit is being filed by the ACLU of Georgia with volunteer lawyers Frank Derrickson, Ralph Goldberg and Sandra Michaels.

