



Rifqa Bary Appears Before Ohio Court

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Washington -- International Christian Concern (ICC) has learned that yesterday, Rifqa Bary, 17, appeared before Franklin County Juvenile Court in Ohio in a custody battle between her and her Muslim family.

According to the report by Columbus Dispatch, Magistrate Mary Goodrich declined the request by Rifqa Bary's parents to sit with her for mediation. Instead, the Judge ruled for their issues to be handled through counseling.

Also at yesterday's hearing, the attorney for Rifqa Bary's family, Omar Tarazi, withdrew his earlier motion barring Rifqa from directly receiving all third-party communications such as cards. Previously he had requested all such communications with Rifqa Bary first to go through Franklin Country Children Services.

Rifqa and her family came to the United States from Sri Lanka eight years ago. Four years ago she converted to Christianity. This past July she ran away from her parents to Florida after alleging that her parents were going to kill her for her decision to follow Christ.

Her family has been waging legal battle to maintain custody over her. In January 2010 the Franklin County Juvenile court is scheduled to hear Rifqa Bary's request to be dependent of the state of Ohio instead of being sent back to her parents.

ICC's president, Jeff King, said "We are extremely concerned with the situation of Rifqa Bary. We hope that the court in Ohio will not give her back to her parents. We urge Ohio officials to seriously consider Rifqa's allegation that her parents could kill her if she is given back to them. There are several examples of killings by Muslim parents when children convert to Christianity or choose to live a life style different from their parents. Unfortunately such killings also happen in Western countries too. We don't want Rifqa Bary to be the next victim."

International Christian Concern

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