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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Salt Lake County Jail Must Finalize Its Strip Search Policy Before Court  
Will Consider Ending a Twenty-Two Year Old Consent Decree**

SALT LAKE CITY—U.S. District Court Judge Bruce S. Jenkins ruled today that the Salt Lake County Jail must finalize its strip search policy before the court will consider its motion to terminate a twenty-two year old consent decree restricting the circumstances under which the jail can constitutionally conduct strip searches.

The consent decree resulted from a 1982 case, *Regan v. County of Salt Lake*, filed by the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah and cooperating attorneys Bob Anderson, Rocky Anderson, and Wayne McCormick on behalf of Judith Regan, an out-of-state reporter, and several other female plaintiffs who had been strip searched at the Salt Lake County Jail. The action charged violations of plaintiffs' Fourth Amendment rights to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures.

Ms. Regan, who was visiting Salt Lake City at the time, was pulled over for a traffic violation and refused to sign her ticket because it required a statement that she would appear in court within a specific time frame, a commitment she knew she could not meet because she would no longer be in the area. She was then handcuffed and eventually strip searched by county law enforcement.

In November 2004, the Salt Lake County Jail asked the Federal District Court to terminate the decree, claiming that there are no current constitutional violations and that the current search procedures at the jail meet constitutional standards. Under the Prison Litigation Reform Act, passed by Congress in 1996, consent decrees that exceed constitutional standards may be terminated in appropriate cases.

Citing gaps in jail policy as well as the fact that the jail has been sued twice since 1982 by plaintiffs who were strip searched, the ACLU of Utah and cooperating attorney Bob Anderson asked the court to appoint an expert witness to evaluate whether or not there are current and ongoing constitutional violations at the jail.

While the court did not consider the expert witness request during today's hearing, ACLU of Utah staff attorney Margaret Plane was pleased that it did require the county to finalize its strip search policy before it would consider the motion to terminate. "We're pleased the court is taking this issue seriously—it makes sense for the county to finalize its policy before the court considers whether there are current and ongoing constitutional violations under that policy."

Salt Lake County has until January 12, 2005 to finalize its policy and to amend and refile its motion.

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