

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BAVARIAN STATE BUILDINGS RECEIVE UPSIDE-DOWN CRUCIFIXES AS KREUZPFLICHT LAW COMES INTO EFFECT

1st JUNE 2018 - MUNICH, GERMANY

While Bavarian Minister President Markus Söder's *'Kreuzpflicht'* law comes into effect today, mandating the hanging of a cross in all Bavarian government buildings, packages have been sent to state buildings across Bavaria containing a crucifix and hanging instructions. But there is a small problem, each crucifix has been slightly altered so that the hook is on the bottom edge, leaving confused state authorities no option but to hang the crucifix upside down.

What might seem like an example of government incompetence has another explanation however. The packages have in fact been sent by British satirical artist [Darren Cullen](#), who was in central Munich last month to launch an art installation called ['Empire Air'](#).

Cullen, whose work was [previously exhibited](#) at Banksy's *Dismaland*, said the project was a protest against "ongoing attempts by right-wing Christian groups, in particular the CSU, to erode secularism in Bavaria."

"Governments must be secular, or else they don't represent the society they govern," Cullen said, "Privileging one particular religion and religious group in the eyes of the state sets a dangerous precedent. It also deliberately feeds into the increasingly toxic political rhetoric against Muslim immigrants we're seeing in Germany and across Europe."

Responding to concerns the project could be seen as anti-Christian, Cullen jokingly referred to Söder's remarks that the cross was "not a religious symbol", but went on to clarify that the project was about defending secularism, not attacking Christianity. "Displaying the cross like this in a government building is an attempt to show those Christians who are part of the dominant culture in Bavaria what it would be like to be confronted with a state apparatus that appeared hostile to their culture. It's trying to turn privilege into empathy - to imagine what this law would feel like if you weren't Christian."

The project was supported and funded by [The Satanic Temple London & UK](#) (TSTUK), a non-theistic advocacy group that promotes egalitarianism and the separation of church and state while encouraging empathy and benevolence in all people. Their statement on the project reads: "The cross is a Christian emblem and an execution tool. It is dishonest and ridiculous to claim it as a simple passive cultural symbol. The replica TSTUK has donated in solidarity is a more honest reflection of Bavaria's growing secular culture, which we're sure Markus Söder can appreciate as an apparent culture authority."

Bavarian Interior Ministry spokesman Oliver Platzer has previously said "We are happy about every cross that is hung up" and that each state authority "should hang up the cross as they think best".

CONTACT: darren@spellingmistakescostlives.com

More details and photographs: www.spellingmistakescostlives.com/kreuzpflicht