

Citing a scheduling conflict in January, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Alfred L. Margolis has removed himself from the trial of former Church of Scientology member Larry Wollersheim, who is suing the church for fraud. The judge's announcement came during the third week of pretrial motions. Margolis said he would decide the motions under submission, but asked attorneys for both sides to return for selection of a new judge. Church attorneys had told Margolis they expected the trial to last a year. In his suit, Wollersheim claims the church falsely led him to believe he could achieve tremendous business success and improve his I.Q. by following Scientology programs that cost him thousands of dollars. The church has branded the suit an attack on freedom of religion.