

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 175

BY REPRESENTATIVES HODGES, BADON, BERTHELOT, BURFORD, HENRY BURNS, CHAMPAGNE, CHANEY, COX, EDWARDS, HARRIS, HARRISON, HENRY, HOFFMANN, HONORE, HOWARD, IVEY, KATRINA JACKSON, TERRY LANDRY, LEOPOLD, LOPINTO, MACK, ORTEGO, PEARSON, POPE, PUGH, REYNOLDS, SCHEXNAYDER, SCHRODER, SIMON, STOKES, TALBOT, THOMPSON, AND WILLMOTT AND SENATORS CROWE, ERDEY, GUILLORY, LONG, NEVERS, WALSWORTH, AND WHITE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to codify into law a United States Department of Defense standard for religious freedom that would be applied to all uniformed services.

WHEREAS, the freedom to practice religion and to express religious thought is acknowledged as our first freedom, enshrined in the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution and is a freedom which belongs to all Americans; and

WHEREAS, our military has fought to preserve all rights and freedoms enumerated in the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, recent news reports and statements of high ranking military personnel reveal a growing intolerance and in some cases outright hostility toward religious expression and affiliation within segments of our nation's military; and

WHEREAS, in Section 533 of the United States National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013, the United States Department of Defense is charged with developing regulations that would implement the conscience protections recently passed by the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, the same protections have not been established throughout the Department of Defense for all service personnel; and

WHEREAS, individual branches of the military have adopted policies that are not in keeping with the spirit of Section 533 of the NDAA; and

WHEREAS, protection of religious freedom is fundamental to all freedoms as Americans.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to codify into law a United States Department of Defense standard for religious freedom that would be applied to all uniformed services, ensuring that all members of the armed forces may engage in peaceable and noncombative religious speech, including noncoercive proselytizing, and that such speech is not in derogation of the good order and discipline of the armed forces.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE