

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 119

100TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ROSS.

5221H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

JOINT RESOLUTION

Submitting to the qualified voters of Missouri an amendment repealing Section 5 of Article I of the Constitution of Missouri, and adopting one new section in lieu thereof relating to religious beliefs, practices, and tenets.

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring therein:

That at the next general election to be held in the state of Missouri, on Tuesday next
2 following the first Monday in November, 2020, or at a special election to be called by the
3 governor for that purpose, there is hereby submitted to the qualified voters of this state, for
4 adoption or rejection, the following amendment to Article I of the Constitution of the state of
5 Missouri:

Section A. Section 5, Article I, Constitution of Missouri, is repealed and one new section
2 adopted in lieu thereof, to be known as Section 5, to read as follows:

Section 5. That all men and women have a natural and indefeasible right to worship
2 Almighty God, **the Author of Life**, according to the dictates of their own consciences; that no
3 human authority can control or interfere with the rights of conscience; that no person shall, on
4 account of his or her religious persuasion or belief, be rendered ineligible to any public office
5 or trust or profit in this state, be disqualified from testifying or serving as a juror, or be molested
6 in his or her person or estate; that to secure a citizen's right to acknowledge Almighty God
7 according to the dictates of his or her own conscience, neither the state nor any of its political
8 subdivisions shall establish any official religion, nor shall a citizen's right to pray or express his
9 or her religious beliefs be infringed; that the state shall not coerce any person to participate in

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

10 any prayer or other religious activity, but shall ensure that any person shall have the right to pray
11 individually or corporately in a private or public setting so long as such prayer does not result
12 in disturbance of the peace or disruption of a public meeting or assembly; that citizens as well
13 as elected officials and employees of the state of Missouri and its political subdivisions shall
14 have the right to pray on government premises and public property so long as such prayers abide
15 within the same parameters placed upon any other free speech under similar circumstances; that
16 the General Assembly and the governing bodies of political subdivisions may extend to
17 ministers, clergypersons, and other individuals the privilege to offer invocations or other prayers
18 at meetings or sessions of the General Assembly or governing bodies; that students may express
19 their beliefs about religion in written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the
20 religious content of their work; that no student shall be compelled to perform or participate in
21 academic assignments or educational presentations that violate his or her religious beliefs; that
22 the state shall ensure public school students their right to free exercise of religious expression
23 without interference, as long as such prayer or other expression is private and voluntary, whether
24 individually or corporately, and in a manner that is not disruptive and as long as such prayers or
25 expressions abide within the same parameters placed upon any other free speech under similar
26 circumstances; and, to emphasize the right to free exercise of religious expression, that all free
27 public schools receiving state appropriations shall display, in a conspicuous and legible manner,
28 the text of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States; **that no woman shall be**
29 **coerced or compelled into undergoing an abortion by any person or entity or because of**
30 **the circumstances of her pregnancy, but that both the mother and the child during**
31 **pregnancy and after birth have the right to the public and private support they need for**
32 **their health and well-being, including from churches and nonprofit organizations; that no**
33 **church, minister, clergyperson, or any other person or entity shall be forced or compelled**
34 **to directly or indirectly fund or participate in abortion contrary to or against the moral,**
35 **ethical, or religious beliefs, practices, or tenets of such person or entity;** but this section shall
36 not be construed to expand the rights of prisoners in state or local custody beyond those afforded
37 by the laws of the United States, excuse acts of licentiousness, nor to justify practices
38 inconsistent with the good order, peace or safety of the state, or with the rights of others. **The**
39 **General Assembly may enact laws and make appropriations, including making limitations**
40 **in appropriation bills, that protect the moral, ethical, and religious beliefs, practices, and**
41 **tenets of persons and entities.**

Section B. Pursuant to chapter 116, RSMo, and other applicable constitutional provisions
2 and laws of this state allowing the general assembly to adopt ballot language for the submission
3 of this joint resolution to the voters of this state, the official summary statement of this resolution
4 shall be as follows:

5 "Shall the Missouri Constitution be amended to:
6 – Acknowledge God as the Author of Life;
7 – Protect the right of a woman to not be coerced into an abortion, and protect the
8 right of the mother and the child to be supported during pregnancy and after birth;
9 and
10 – Defend persons from being forced to fund abortions against their religious
11 beliefs?".

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