

ENGROSSED HOUSE
BILL NO. 2144

By: Davis of the House

and

Smith of the Senate

(marriage and family - amending 43 O.S., Section 7 -
solemnization of marriages -
emergency)

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 43 O.S. 1991, Section 7, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 305, O.S.L. 1999 (43 O.S. Supp. 1999, Section 7), is amended to read as follows:

Section 7. A. 1. All marriages must be contracted by a formal ceremony ~~performed or~~ solemnized in the presence of at least two adult, competent persons as witnesses, by a ~~judge or retired judge of any court in this state, or an ordained or authorized preacher or minister of the Gospel, priest or other ecclesiastical dignitary of any denomination who has been duly ordained or authorized by the church to which he or she belongs to preach the Gospel, or a rabbi and who is at least eighteen (18) years of age~~ person authorized by this subsection to perform marriages.

2. The following persons who are at least eighteen (18) years of age are authorized to solemnize marriages:

- a. a duly licensed or ordained clergy,
- b. a judge of any court in this state,
- c. a retired judge, and
- d. a Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

B. 1. ~~The~~ A judge shall place ~~his or her~~ the order of appointment on file with the office of the court clerk of the county in which ~~he or she~~ the judge resides.

2. The ~~preacher, minister, priest, rabbi, or ecclesiastical dignitary~~ licensed ordained clergy who is a resident of this state shall have filed, in the office of the court clerk of the county in which ~~he or she~~ such clergy resides, a copy of the credentials or authority from ~~his or her~~ the church or synagogue authorizing ~~him or her~~ that clergy to solemnize marriages.

3. The ~~preacher, minister, priest, rabbi, or ecclesiastical dignitary~~ licensed ordained clergy who is not a resident of this state, but has complied with the laws of the state of which ~~he or she~~ that clergy is a resident, shall have filed once, in the office of the court clerk of the county in which ~~he or she~~ such clergy intends to perform or solemnize a marriage, a copy of the credentials or authority from ~~his or her~~ that church or synagogue authorizing ~~him or her~~ that clergy to solemnize marriages.

4. The filing by resident or nonresident ~~preachers, ministers, priests, rabbis, ecclesiastical dignitaries~~ licensed ordained clergy or judges shall be effective in and for all counties of this state; provided, no fee shall be charged for such recording.

C. No person ~~herein~~ authorized to ~~perform or~~ solemnize a marriage ceremony pursuant to this section shall do so unless the marriage license issued therefor be first delivered into ~~his or her~~ the possession of such person nor unless ~~he or she~~ such person has good reason to believe the persons presenting themselves ~~before him or her~~ for marriage are the identical persons named in the license, and for whose marriage the same was issued, and that there is no legal objection or impediment to such marriage.

D. Marriages between persons belonging to the society called Friends, or Quakers, the spiritual assembly of the Baha'is, or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which have no ordained

minister, may be solemnized by the persons and in the manner prescribed by and practiced in any such society, church, or assembly.

E. For the purpose of this section, "licensed or ordained clergy" includes but is not limited to ministers, priests, rabbis, preachers, elders or other ecclesiastical dignitaries who by the customs, practices, rules or regulations of a religious or apostolic organization holding a valid exemption from federal income taxation pursuant to Section 501d of the federal Internal Revenue Code are ordained or are otherwise authorized or permitted to solemnize marriages or to officiate at marriage ceremonies.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the House of Representatives the 29th day of February, 2000.

Speaker of the House of
Representatives

Passed the Senate the ____ day of _____, 2000.

President of the Senate