

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 48th Legislature (2001)

HOUSE BILL HB1145

By: Graves

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to public buildings and public works; providing legislative findings; authorizing the posting of the Ten Commandments in any public buildings of the state and political subdivision of the state; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 20 of Title 61, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Legislature finds that:

1. Religious belief and obedience to God's laws were integral to the founding of America, the Pilgrims and Puritans, who first settled America, having strongly believed in faith in God and obedience to God's laws, and the Pilgrims having stated in the Mayflower Compact that they had come here "for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith";

2. The Founding Fathers of America shared this belief in God and God's laws, having declared in the Declaration of Independence that America was separating from Great Britain and establishing itself based upon "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God", and having further declared it to be a self-evident truth that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights and that governments are instituted to secure these rights;

3. America's first Constitution, the Articles of Confederation, made reference to "the Great Governor of the World" and that

America's present Constitution acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord being dated in "the Year of our Lord" 1787;

4. The first Congress of the United States reenacted the Northwest Ordinance in which it declared: "Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged";

5. George Washington, recognized by many as the Father of America, stated in his farewell address that religion and morality are indispensable supports to political prosperity and that "reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle";

6. James Madison, recognized by many as the Father of the Constitution, stated that the future of American civilization had been staked not upon civil government, but upon the capacity of Americans "to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God"; and that Article I, Section 7 of the United States Constitution, in observance of the Fourth Commandment, excludes Sundays in the ten days the President has to return a bill to Congress;

7. The Ten Commandments, as enumerated in Chapter 20 of the Book of Exodus of the Old Testament of the Bible, is posted in the halls of the Congress of the United States and the chambers of the United States Supreme Court;

8. The United States Supreme Court prevented public school children from enjoying the same right the Court and Congress have to observe the Ten Commandments by ruling that the Ten Commandments may not be posted in a public school because, as the Court said, the children might read, meditate upon or obey the Commandments; that had the public school children been permitted to read, meditate upon and be taught to obey the Ten Commandments, America might have avoided the increasing teenage pregnancies, venereal disease, theft,

destruction of property, and mass murders that have so often been occurring in public schools around the nation; and that the Supreme Court of the United States should overturn this erroneous and destructive precedent;

9. Since the United States Supreme Court early on held that when a Common Law term is used in the Constitution, the term carries with it into the Constitution, the Common Law meaning; that "an establishment of religion," a Common Law term, meant at Common Law, an official state church where one religious sect would enjoy preeminence over other sects; that posting of the Ten Commandments in any public building is not an establishment of religion forbidden by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution; and

10. Knowledge of and belief in the moral law as enumerated in the Ten Commandments is essential to the maintenance of morality and law and order in the public schools of Oklahoma and in the public at large, and that all citizens, including public school children, should enjoy the same rights of observing the moral law as enjoyed by the United States Supreme Court and Congress.

B. Each chief administrative officer of any agency, board, commission, office, institution, or other governmental office of this state or political subdivision of this state is authorized to post copies of the Ten Commandments as stated in Chapter 20 of the Book of Exodus of the Old Testament of the Bible in the public areas of the space under control of that chief administrative officer.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2001.

48-1-5897            MCD            6/12/15