

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 52nd Legislature (2009)

3 HOUSE BILL 1330

By: Ritze

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6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to the state capital and Capitol
8 Building; providing for legislative findings;
9 creating the Ten Commandments Monument Display Act;
10 authorizing the placement of a monument displaying
11 and honoring the Ten Commandments on the grounds of
12 the Oklahoma State Capitol; authorizing the Secretary
13 of State to work with certain persons in designing a
14 monument; providing for the location for the
15 monument; authorizing the Attorney General to defend
16 certain challenges; providing for codification
17 providing for noncodification; and providing an
18 effective date.

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

26 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be
27 codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

28 The Legislature finds:

29 1. That the Ten Commandments found in the Bible, Exodus 20:1-17
30 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21, are an important component of the moral
31 foundation of the laws and legal system of the United States of
32 America and of the State of Oklahoma;

1 2. That the courts of the United States of America and of
2 various states frequently cite the Ten Commandments in published
3 decisions;

4 3. That the Ten Commandments represent a philosophy of
5 government held by many of the founders of this nation and by many
6 Oklahomans and other Americans today, that God has ordained civil
7 government and has delegated limited authority to civil government,
8 that God has limited the authority of civil government, and that God
9 has endowed people with certain unalienable rights, including life,
10 liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;

11 4. That in order that they may understand and appreciate the
12 basic principles of the American system of government, the people of
13 the United States and of the State of Oklahoma need to identify the
14 Ten Commandments, one of many sources, as influencing the
15 development of what has become modern law; and

16 5. That the placing of a monument to the Ten Commandments on
17 the grounds of the Oklahoma State Capitol would help the people of
18 the United States and of Oklahoma to know the Ten Commandments as
19 the moral foundation of law.

20 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
21 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 10.1 of Title 73, unless there
22 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

23 A. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Ten
24 Commandments Monument Display Act".

1 B. The Oklahoma Secretary of State or designee is hereby
2 authorized to permit and arrange for the placement on the State
3 Capitol grounds of a suitable monument displaying and honoring the
4 Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments monument shall use the same
5 words used on the monument at issue in *Von Orden v. Perry*, that the
6 United States Supreme Court ruled constitutional. This monument
7 shall be designed, constructed, and placed on the Capitol grounds by
8 private entities at no expense to the State of Oklahoma. The
9 Secretary of State or designee is authorized to assist private
10 entities in selecting a location for the monument and arranging a
11 suitable time for its placement.

12 C. In the event that the legality or constitutionality of the
13 Ten Commandments monument is challenged in a court of law, the
14 Oklahoma Attorney General or designee is hereby authorized to
15 prepare and present a legal defense of the monument and shall work
16 with any legal services provider, if any designated by the
17 Legislature.

18 D. The placement of this monument shall not be construed to
19 mean that the State of Oklahoma favors any particular religion or
20 denomination thereof over others, but rather will be placed on the
21 Capitol grounds where there are numerous other monuments.

22 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2009.

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24 52-1-5295 LRB 01/06/09