

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 2nd Session of the 53rd Legislature (2012)

4 HOUSE CONCURRENT
5 RESOLUTION 1023

By: Kern

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8 AS INTRODUCED

9 A Concurrent Resolution relating to religious
10 freedom; encouraging Oklahomans to commemorate and
11 celebrate January 16 as Religious Freedom Day; and
12 providing for distribution.

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14 WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson counted the freedom of worship as one
15 of America's greatest blessings; and

16 WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson said it was "a liberty deemed in other
17 countries incompatible with good government and yet proved by our
18 experience to be its best support"; and

19 WHEREAS, the contributions of people of faith are and have been
20 important to our society, and in order to maintain a pluralistic
21 society we must work to ensure equal treatment of faith-based
22 organizations and people of faith without religious bigotry in any
23 form; and

1 WHEREAS, each year since 1993, the President of the United
2 States has proclaimed January 16 to be national "Religious Freedom
3 Day"; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2003 the United States Department of Education
5 issued guidelines explaining teachers' and students' religious
6 liberties. These guidelines outline seven forms of protected
7 freedom of speech about religion:

8 1. Students can pray, read their Bibles, and talk about their
9 faith at school during school hours;

10 2. Students can organize prayer groups and Bible studies and
11 announce their meetings;

12 3. Students can express their faith in their class work and
13 homework;

14 4. Teachers can organize prayer groups and Bible studies with
15 their colleagues;

16 5. Students may be able to go off campus to have a Bible study
17 during school hours;

18 6. Students can express their faith at a school event; and

19 7. Students can express their faith at their graduation
20 ceremony; and

21 WHEREAS, it is important that all Oklahomans recognize the
22 annual Presidential proclamation of Religious Freedom Day and all
23 teachers and students be informed of the U.S. Department of
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1 Education's "Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public
2 Elementary and Secondary Schools".

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
4 OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 53RD OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE SENATE
5 CONCURRING THEREIN:

6 THAT the Oklahoma Legislature hereby encourages all Oklahomans
7 to commemorate and celebrate January 16 as "Religious Freedom Day"
8 each year through appropriate events and activities in homes,
9 schools, and places of worship.

10 THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to Governor Mary
11 Fallin and to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Janet
12 Barresi.

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14 DIRECT TO CALENDAR.

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