

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

WHEREAS, the national motto of the United States is "In God We Trust"; and

WHEREAS, the national motto was adopted in 1956 and is codified in the laws of the United States at Section 302 of Title 36, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, the national motto is a reference to the nation's "religious heritage" (*Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668, 676 (1984)); and

WHEREAS, the national motto recognizes the religious beliefs and practices of the American people as an aspect of our national history and culture; and

WHEREAS, nearly every criminal law on the books can be traced to some religious principle or inspiration; and

WHEREAS, the national motto is deeply interwoven into the fabric of our civil polity; and

WHEREAS, the national motto recognizes the historical fact that our nation was believed to have been founded "under God"; and

WHEREAS, the content of the national motto is as old as the Republic itself and has always been as integral a part of the First Amendment as the very words of that charter of religious liberty; and

WHEREAS, the display and teaching of the national motto to public school children has a valid secular purpose, such secular purpose being to foster patriotism, symbolize the historical role of religion in our society, express confidence in the future, inculcate hope, and instruct in humility; and

WHEREAS, there is a long tradition of government acknowledgment of religion in mottos, oaths, and anthems; and

WHEREAS, the national motto serves "the legitimate secular purposes of solemnizing public occasions, expressing confidence in the future, and encouraging the recognition of what is worthy of appreciation in society" (*Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. at 693 (O'Connor, J., concurring)); and

WHEREAS, the national motto reflects the sentiment that "[w]e are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being" (*Zorach v. Clauson*, 343 U.S. 306, 313 (1952)); and

WHEREAS, President George Washington, in his Farewell Address, stated, "[o]f all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports," and "[w]hatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle," and "let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle"; and

WHEREAS, President John Adams wrote that "it is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand"; and

WHEREAS, the role of religion in public life is an important one which deserves the public's attention; and

WHEREAS, the signers of the Declaration of Independence appealed to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of their intentions, and avowed a firm reliance of the protection of Divine Providence; and

WHEREAS, President George Washington, in his First Inaugural Address, said that "it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that His benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes"; and

WHEREAS, The First Congress urged President George Washington to proclaim "a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many single favors of Almighty God"; and

WHEREAS, the First Congress reenacted the Northwest Ordinance, which stated that "[r]eligion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged"; and

WHEREAS, the Declaration of Independence demonstrates this Nation was founded on transcendent values which flow from a belief in a Supreme Being; and

WHEREAS, the Founding Fathers believed devotedly that there was a God and that the unalienable rights of man were rooted in Him, is clearly evidenced in their writings, from the Mayflower Compact to the Constitution itself; and

WHEREAS, religion has been closely identified with the history and Government of the United States; and

WHEREAS, our national life reflects a religious people who earnestly pray that the Supreme Lawgiver guide them in every measure which may be worthy of His blessing; and

WHEREAS, the national motto is prominently engraved in the wall above the Speaker's dais in the Chamber of the House of Representatives, appears over the entrance to the Chamber of the Senate, and is depicted on all United States coins and currency:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-Second General Assembly, First Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby affirm the support of the Missouri Legislature for the United State's national motto "In God We Trust", and encourages the display of the national motto of the United States in public buildings throughout the state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Missouri General Assembly affirm our support for and

encourage any elected or appointed official, state employee, teacher, administrator, or local school board in any public school district of this state, to read or post in any public building, school, classroom, or at a school event any excerpts or portions of any historical document, writing, or record relating to the founding of the United States of America or the state of Missouri, or both, and any historical document, writing, or record that represents a substantial influence on national or state history, including:

(1) The Preamble to the Missouri Constitution;

(2) The Declaration of Independence;

(3) The Constitution of the United States of America;

(4) The Mayflower Compact;

(5) The national motto;

(6) The National Anthem;

(7) The Pledge of Allegiance;

(8) The writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the founding fathers and Presidents of the United States of America;

(9) The writings, speeches, and documents relating to civil rights leaders of the United States of America;

(10) The writings, speeches, and documents relating to the signers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America;

(11) The decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States of America; and

(12) Acts of the Congress of the United States of America, including the published text of the Congressional record; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that there shall be no content-based censorship of American or Missouri history or heritage as represented in its historical documents, writings, and records based upon religious references contained within these documents, writings, and records; nor shall there be a use of such documents, writings, and records to advance or inhibit a religion or particular religious belief; and  
Resolution

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and the members of the Missouri Congressional delegation.  
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