

"I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute." - JFK

GOD & GOVERNMENT A DANGEROUS MIX



NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER LAW UNCONSTITUTIONAL

We applaud the federal court ruling in *Freedom From Religion Foundation v. Obama* by Federal District Judge Barbara Crabb on April 15 declaring the annual **National Day of Prayer unconstitutional**. Congress and the President have no business telling Americans when or whether to pray.

Our secular nation was founded in part by refugees seeking freedom of conscience and freedom from religious tyranny. They wanted a land where government could not tell them which church to support, what religious rituals to engage in or what to believe or disbelieve. They knew there can be no true religious liberty without the freedom to dissent. Whether to pray, or believe in a god who answers prayer, is an intensely precious and personal decision protected under our First Amendment as a paramount matter of conscience.

Congress, in 1952, abridged that freedom of conscience when it designated a **National Day of Prayer**: "The President shall set aside and proclaim a suitable day each year, other than a Sunday, as a National Day of Prayer, on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups, and as individuals." (Public Law 82-324)

The proposal for the law originated with the Rev. Billy Graham, who asked Congress to declare an annual National Day of Prayer so "the Lord Jesus Christ" would be recognized across the land. Sen. Absalom Robertson, father of Rev. Pat Robertson, introduced the bill to instill "faith in an Almighty God." Influential evangelicals lobbied Congress in 1988 to designate the first Thursday in May as the yearly prayer date, so they could better organize devotional events uniting religion and government. An evangelical prayer task force submits prayer proclamation wording, themes and scripture verses to the President, also pressuring governors and mayors to exhort citizens to pray.

Our founders did not pray when they adopted our godless Constitution, which shows their intent to separate religious ritual from government. The Constitution's only references to religion are exclusionary. The U.S. President and elected officials have neither the moral nor the constitutional authority to exhort citizens to pray and to gather with others "to turn to God in prayer," much less to tell citizens what to pray about, or set aside an entire day for prayer every year.

As Judge Crabb ruled, "In this instance, the **government has taken sides on a matter that must be left to individual conscience.**"

Don't let the Christian Right hijack our secular Constitution **THE FREEDOM FROM RELIGION FOUNDATION**, Plaintiff

Individual Plaintiffs: Anne Gaylor (President Emerita), Dan Barker (Co-President), Annie Laurie Gaylor (Co-President), Phyllis Rose (Officer-Secretary), Jill Dean (Board Member), Paul Gaylor (Board Member)

FFRF thanks sponsors of this ad, including:

Richard L. Bolton
Nobel Laureate Paul D. Boyer
Marle Brandt
John Carver, PhD
Ian Chart
James Coors
Steven Crow
Jeff Dean
Daniel C. Dennett
Brian Donnelly
April Edwards

Alex Edwards
Bruce Ericson
Andrew Fleschner
James Franklin
Jason Goemaat
Steve Goldrich
Lester Goldstein
Ernest Harburg
Richard Hermsen
Kirk Hornbeck
Keith Hughes

Donald C. Johanson
Jill Johnson
Woody Kaplan
Pamela Koslyn
Ursula K. Le Guin
William Lobdell
Eileen Lottman
Harriet Mitteldorf
Rebecca Newberger Goldstein
Professor Paul Newman
David O'Brien

Kenneth Peters
Steven Pinker
Katha Pollitt
S.D. Post
David Randolph
Ron Reagan
Tony Roberts
George Rosborough
James Russell
David Russell
Robert Sapolsky

Evan Schultz
Kenneth Silverman
Charlie Sitzes
Edward Sorel
Edward Susterich
Julia Sweeney
Fred Thorlin
Jean Thrall
Dr. Stephen F. Uhl
Diane R. Uhl
Terrence "Lee" Zehrer

Join FFRF • Donate to our Legal Fund • Sign FFRF's online petition at FFRF.ORG
Ask for information & a sample of FFRF's newspaper, *Freethought Today* • 1-800-335-4021

Help FFRF defend its historic court victory, *FFRF v. Obama*, now on appeal, and restore respect for America's secular heritage. FFRF is a 501(c)(3) educational charity working since 1978 to keep state and church separate and to educate the public about nontheism. FFRF is the nation's largest association of freethinkers (atheists, agnostics and other skeptics). Freedom depends on freethinkers.

Freedom From Religion Foundation

P.O. Box 750 • Madison WI 53701 • (800) 335-4021

- I would like to become a member. (Includes 10 issues of **Freethought Today** newspaper.)
- I would like to donate to FFRF's Legal Fund. \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone/Email _____

Make payable to "FFRF, Inc." Dues & donations are tax-deductible.

Annual Membership Dues	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Household	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member	\$1,000
<input type="checkbox"/> "After Life"	\$5,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$25

"Question with boldness even the existence of a God."
- Thomas Jefferson

FFRF.ORG

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION FOUNDATION

FFRF protects membership confidentiality and does not divulge, rent, sell or give away its mailing list.