

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

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August 25, 2015

SENT VIA U.S. MAIL AND EMAIL TO: info@governor.arkansas.gov
arsos@sos.arkansas.gov

The Honorable Asa Hutchinson, Governor
The Honorable Mark Martin, Secretary of State,
Chair, Arkansas State Capitol Arts And Grounds Commission
State of Arkansas
State Capitol
500 Woodlane Ave
Little Rock AR 72201

Re: Request to Grounds Commission to place nontheistic monument at State Capitol

Dear Governor and Secretary of State:

On behalf of the 22,700 members of our organization, including our Arkansas membership, our nonprofit seeks official permission to place a permanent monument expressing the nontheistic point of view at the Arkansas State Capitol.

More than 23% of the adult U.S. population today identifies as nonreligious. If the State of Arkansas is going to place a biblical edict on state grounds at the seat of state government — thereby turning bible believers into insiders and the rest of us into outsiders — it is naturally incumbent on your state to also allow representation of the views of citizens who reject the biblical or religious perspective.

Most freethinkers find the Ten Commandments to epitomize the childishness, the vindictiveness, the sexism, the inflexibility and the inadequacies of the bible as a book of morals. The first four commandments have in fact nothing to do with good conduct, but are threats revealing the uneasy vanity of the biblical deity. The Ten Commandments, couched in negatives and full of “thou shalt nots,” are the antithesis of the Bill of Rights, focused positives and guarantees to protect freedom, liberty and conscience. Enclosed is our brochure, “What’s Wrong with the Ten Commandments?” for further reference.

The first commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” is reason alone to have vetoed the Ten Commandments bill that passed your legislature this year. It is not the business of the State of Arkansas to tell citizens which gods to have, how many gods to have or whether to have any gods at all! It is not the business of the secular State of Arkansas to endorse one set of religious edicts or another, or religion over nonreligion.

Since, however, the State of Arkansas has misguidedly announced its intention to endorse and display this set of bible edicts, we respectfully request the right to place, at our own expense, a stone monument which says:

MAY REASON PREVAIL

There are no gods, no devils, no angels, no heaven or hell.
There is only our natural world.
Religion is but myth and superstition that hardens hearts and enslaves minds.

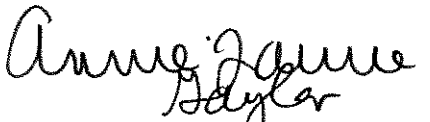
Freedom depends on freethinkers

KEEP STATE AND CHURCH SEPARATE

Presented (add date) to the State of Arkansas on behalf of the membership of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, in honor of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

We would appreciate hearing back about our request at your very earliest convenience.

Very truly



Annie Laurie Gaylor and Dan Barker

