From: Gary Block <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious
Date: Thu, 02 Jul 2026 08:53:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

From: Susanne Long <[redacted]>
To: RLC DOJ <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - MANY SECTIONS
Date: Thu, 02 Jul 2026 12:32:47 -0400
Importance: Normal

FIRST OF ALL, WHY IS PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE CHRISTIAN NATIONALIST (with ONE Orthodox Jewish rabbi which often equates to the most conservative branch of Judaism) RELIGIOUS COMMISSION BEING HANDLED BY THE DOJ????? This is suspect in itself! As an American-born citizen who IS NOT a Christian nationalist, I am horrified that you all are trying to destroy the separation of church & state which is a fundamental basis of the USA ever since its inception & was completely endorsed by our Founding Fathers. The Ten Commandments should NOT be posted in any public school as there are many Americans who do not have the Bible as the cornerstone of their religion. Students should not be coerced into praying in public school. If anything should be posted, it is the Golden Rule in all kind & moral religions & philosophical codes, which most of you do not even practice with your public hate of others who are not like you. I always learned that Jesus was kind & gentle, preaching to love your neighbor as yourself, his second greatest Commandment. Yet you express your hatred of the LGBQ+ community & advocate passing laws against them. This is a complete contradiction of many Christian nationalists' tenet that parents should be in control of their minor children's upbringing & medical treatment. Most parents want their children to be happy & not depressed & suicidal, as many LGBQ+ children are. The Johnson Amendment SHOULD NOT be eliminated. Also, religious schools SHOULD NOT receive public funding & parents should not receive public vouchers to send their children to private religious schools. Parents are free to send their children to private schools or home-school them, but they should pay the expenses. Religion certainly has NOT proven to be the conscience of the current administration, as Trump has openly flouted most of the Ten Commandments & the moral code provided by Jesus or any other moral religious leader!!!! Another unbelievable recommendation you have floated is restoring full pay and pension benefits for military service members who were discharged for refusing COVID-19 vaccines. It has ALWAYS been compulsory for military members to receive vaccines for communicable diseases so these diseases don't rapidly spread among the close-living military members & cause severe illness or death!!!! This e-mail would be ENDLESS if it commented against every prejudiced recommendation of this commission. In conclusion, this COMPLETELY BIASED report should be shredded & thrown in the dumpster & never be considered ever again!!!!!

Sincerely Yours,
Susanne M. Long

From: Judy Huffaker <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment
Date: Thu, 02 Jul 2026 16:14:41 -0400
Importance: Normal

General Comment
We support the religious liberty document.
Freedom of religion was a founding principle of our country from the beginning.

No religion should be mocked nor its followers persecuted because of their beliefs.
Our country was founded by individuals who sought the freedom to worship as they believed.

Neither schools nor any other public entity should interfere with the family's teachings of sex and faith. Parents are in charge of their children and their children's sex determination, not public entities.

Vaccines and other medical procedures are not to be forced upon individuals. These personal health decisions are not the role of government. Persons should not be punished or forced to accept a government regulation regarding vaccines nor convinced to change their birth sex into something else via surgery and medications.

We fully support the founding principle of religious freedom for our country. May God bless the USA.

Dr Richard and Judy Huffaker

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jerrod Sessler <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Chapter 2 & 14 – Jerrod Sessler.
Date: Thu, 02 Jul 2026 23:28:48 -0400
Importance: Normal

The American system of ordered liberty has deep historical and cultural roots in the Judeo-Christian moral and philosophical tradition. This tradition, with its emphasis on the inherent dignity of the individual, accountability to a higher authority, and protections for conscience—uniquely created the conditions for robust religious liberty and genuine pluralism. The Founders drew upon this heritage while deliberately crafting constitutional safeguards against establishment and religious tests.

The report should affirm this historical and cultural foundation as essential to understanding why religious liberty has flourished here, while clearly upholding the Constitution's guarantees of free exercise for people of all faiths and its prohibition on religious tests or establishments. Preserving the foundational principles that enable diverse religious expression, without allowing any ideology to redefine or supplant the constitutional order, is fully consistent with both our heritage and our governing documents.

Thriving in America!
Jerrod



Jerrod Sessler
Congressional Candidate
about.me/jsessler
www.jerrodforcongress.com

From: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - General Comment - George Hough
Date: Fri, 03 Jul 2026 10:00:16 -0400
Importance: Normal

I believe this is a good path forward for our country. I would support the twelve recommendations brought forth by the Commission.
George Hough

From: Jay Laws <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT — CHAPTER 14 — Jay Laws
Date: Fri, 03 Jul 2026 11:50:55 -0400
Importance: Normal

I agree with the 12 recommendations to strengthen our nation's religious liberty and request that they be pursued. Our religious liberties need to be taught, protected, and advanced as they benefit all citizens, religious or not. Many times, the quote, "separation of church and state" (which "does not appear in the First Amendment or anywhere else in the Constitution"), has been used to erode our constitutional exercise of faith.
Thank you, Commission Members and President Trump, for your work on this important matter.

From: Doris Wolfe <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] General Comment - Executive Summary - Doris Wolfe
Date: Fri, 03 Jul 2026 14:32:50 -0400
Importance: Normal

I agree with all points made in the Executive Summary and thank the Commission for all their hard work.

Doris Wolfe

Sent from my iPhone

From: Colton Kennon <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Info
Date: Fri, 03 Jul 2026 20:29:00 -0400
Importance: Normal

If you plan on getting you information from Haley Von Tungeln she's a fraud.

There's a reason I'm still alive.
Sent from my iPhone

From: shirley bloethe <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment- Religious rights
Date: Fri, 03 Jul 2026 21:56:40 -0400
Importance: Normal

I'm am in favor of our religious freedom and rights be encouraged and expressed by any person in the public sphere- we (our country) were FOUNDED on religious liberty and freedom by and for all religions and people!

Thank you 🙏
Rev. Shirley R Bloethe
CT

From: Maria Tuma <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Cc: Eli Bennett <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please tell me if you are attending my case?
Date: Sat, 04 Jul 2026 10:11:32 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Personnel in the JUSTICE DEPT:

On January 9, 2026 I mailed a cover letter and a **RED** folder with 22 pages of my TRUE explanation

of the INJUSTICES Miami Dade County Public Schools did to me!

TO: Mr. Stanley E. Woodward, Jr.

JUSTICE SHOULD HAVE NO LIMITATIONS!

Specially when The First Amendment is violated!

Also on June 11, 2026 I mailed from the US POST OFFICE the same inquiry to the Office of

THE HONORABLE Harmeet K. Dhillon

Awaiting RIGHTEOUS JUSTICE, I remain truly faithful,

Maria E. Tuma, Artist, Art Educator

[redacted]

www.mariatumapaintings.com

PS: On 9/23/08 I received this email from one of my former Art Students:

Miss Tuma...

I was a student of yours MANY years ago at Westview. I did a Google search and found your page.
Iam so sorry to hear of the issue that led to you leaving MDPS...

I did the search because you and John Doyle were two of the greatest educators I had ever met in the public school forum.

Thanks!!!
Rick Bergquist
Westview Junior High
1975-1977

It was an honor to receive this email from Rick. I did not know I impacted this student and perhaps others is such a positive manner. I only tried to do the best I knew to give to others. The sad story is that my believes and my love for others was seen by the Miami Dade Public Schools administrators as a bad thing and I was dismissed from the Public Schools, inspite having many students win Art Contests and was nominated by my good peers as Teacher of the Year in Ojus Elementary...

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

Isaiah 5:20

This information was added on April 18, 2011 on my website.

From: Sally Perkins <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment--Religious Liberty Commission draft report--S. Perkins
Date: Sat, 04 Jul 2026 14:42:54 -0400
Importance: Normal

I am a person of faith, active within the church and in my community. I live in Washington State. I have read the draft report and have concerns about several aspects.

1. **Chapter 9, First Do No Harm, leaves out an area of significant harm** by not addressing the loss of key health care services due to consolidation in the health system/hospital arena.

   The recommendations in Chapter 9 protect the health system's or the hospital's or the individual provider's right to refuse to provide services. None of the recommendations addresses what happens to the patient when refusal is the only option available in their community — which is no longer a hypothetical, it's the documented result of two decades of consolidation. Washington State has experienced such consolidation and it has reduced access to women's health care services, including abortion and sterilizations.

   Patients who need or request care deserve the same protections as health systems, hospitals, and providers. Please expand Chapter 9 to include patients' access to needed/requested services. This is not an abstraction; real people have been hurt by lack of access to key services.

2. **The report says it speaks for "religious liberty for all Americans." Yet Muslims are barely mentioned in the report**.

   This is of particular concern to me since there have been multiple well-documented attacks on mosques right here in the Puget Sound region of Washington State.

   Acknowledgement of, or listing of, the attacks on mosques does not appear in your report. On October 11, 2021, there was an arson fire at the Islamic Center of Tacoma — Pierce County's only mosque — while people were inside for evening prayer; everyone evacuated safely, but the building was unusable for months, and CAIR-Washington called for a hate-crime investigation. I have been warmly welcomed and provided a wonderful meal at this mosque; it was a tragedy to have it rendered unusable due to arson.

   Other documented Puget Sound incidents include attacks on the Islamic Center of the Eastside in Bellevue; repeated vandalism at the Muslim Association of Puget Sound in Redmond (the state's largest mosque, 5,000+ members) starting in 2016; a 2021 break-in and desecration of Qurans at Umar Al-Farooq Masjid in Mountlake Terrace; and a 2024 rock-thrown-through-the-window incident at the Islamic Center of Federal Way that prompted an FBI investigation.

   Other reports of vandalism or damage to other faith groups' facilities were mentioned, but the writers could not find room in the report for any of these attacks on Muslim holy sites — including an incident where worshippers were inside a burning building in Washington State, where several Commission members and Advisory Board members reside. This means the report is incomplete at best and misleading at worst, when addressing real threats to people of faith in the United States.

I would further note that Islam is the second-largest and fastest-growing major religion in the world, and is rapidly growing in North America — Pew Research documents 52% growth in the Muslim population in North America between 2010 and 2020 alone. The United States is currently engaged in extensive military, diplomatic, and political entanglement with Muslim-majority nations, with complicated impacts for our country as well as theirs. Our interactions with Muslim majority nations are important and need attention from faith leaders in our country.

How this country's own institutions treat its Muslim citizens is not trivial — it bears directly on this nation's credibility when it advocates for religious freedom abroad. The Commission's Ambassador for International Religious Freedom should be well-versed about Muslims worldwide and here in the United States.

3. Finally, as a Christian with many friends of other denominations, faiths, beliefs, and some with skepticism about faith in general…**I am concerned that the Commission's membership does not reflect or represent this diversity of thought and belief**, and thus the draft report does not reflect this diversity of thought and belief either.

   I ask that you rebalance the membership of the Commission before you start to review these comments and before you consider changes to the draft report. Groups that appear to me to be under-represented include mainline Protestant leaders, Black church leaders, theologically conservative leaders who affirm separation of church and state, and Muslim leaders.

   The final report needs to reflect the actual religious diversity of our country.

Sally Perkins

From: John Griffin <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious Liberty
Date: Sun, 05 Jul 2026 13:31:42 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for taking up this important subject & working towards restoring a lost element of our liberty & founding, thank you again

JOHN GRIFFIN
PACIFIC PROPERTY SERVICE
[redacted] [redacted] **(cell)**
website:**http://pacificpropertyservice.com**
email: [redacted]

From: G Cascio <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – [Wall or Bridge between Church and State – [Gwen Cascio]
Date: Sun, 05 Jul 2026 22:43:51 -0400
Importance: Normal

I am grateful that the idea of a "Wall" between Church and State is being looked into and brought back to the founding fathers' understanding that God is part of our society and our government.

I am concerned with supplying yet another word "Bridge" that could be misconstrued. A bridge does help people to gain access to each other but it also could be constrained to mean it is a 'choke point' or 'gate' that they can decide which religious affiliations can cross into activity in the general populace. I believe that the Government should not be gatekeeping or categorizing Churches. I believe worship of God is an innate unalienable right. Maybe at this time it wouldn't happen but I could see it having a new meaning in other years.

From: [redacted]
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - General comments - Elizabeth Frazao
Date: Mon, 06 Jul 2026 13:48:40 -0400
Importance: Normal

The Religious Liberty Commission's draft report provided an excellent and comprehensive description of some of the issues constraining freedom of religion in the U.S, or affected by the lack of religious freedom. The report wisely explains that "safeguarding religious liberty requires more than defending legal rights after they have been violated. It requires cultivating a culture that understands why those rights exist in the first place. It requires correcting misconceptions about the Constitution, strengthening conscience protections, ensuring equal treatment under the law, and fostering renewed appreciation for them."

The report makes 12 general recommendations aimed at addressing those issues, by (1) improving Americans' knowledge about what the Constitution and the law actually say, and what it allows and does not allow; (2) making it easier to report, track, and litigate violations, and (3) correcting some of the past abuses.

However, I failed to see any definition of the term "religious". So when I read, on p. 22 of the report, that "Religious displays like the Bladensburg Peace Cross are allowed on public property", I immediately wondered if Satanic displays could also be allowed on public property (as occurred in December 2024, when a Satanic display was placed near a Christmas Nativity scene, on city property near the New Hampshire State House). Many people found the display offensive, yet nobody knew quite what to do about it.

Similarly, are Islam/Muslim traditions, practices, and laws - such as building mosques, schools, and entire communities, issuing multiple loud calls to prayer, and practicing Sharia law - protected by religious freedom? As I understand it, Islam IS NOT A RELIGION, BUT A POLITICAL MILITARY IDEOLOGY. But, who gets to make that decision official?

From: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>, "Allyson N. Ho" <[redacted]>, "[redacted]" <[redacted]>, "[redacted]" <[redacted]>, "FARA.Public" <[redacted]>, Rewardsforjustice Info <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Great Job By President Trump In Getting Pastor Ezra Jin Freed / PRAISE GOD
Date: Mon, 06 Jul 2026 16:47:08 -0400
Importance: Normal
Attachments: William_Rogers_John_the_Baptist_for_Kandhamal.pdf; Kandhamal_Advocacy_&_summary_campaign.docx; Kandhamal_Advocacy_Summary_-_June21(2)_-_Copy.docx
Inline-Images: 1783368875892blob.jpg; 1783368995031blob.jpg; 1783370212309blob.jpg; 1783370235424blob.jpg; 1783370258028blob.jpg; 1783370282464blob.jpg; 1783370299804blob.jpg

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Pastor Ezra Jin freed from Chinese prison after Trump requested release

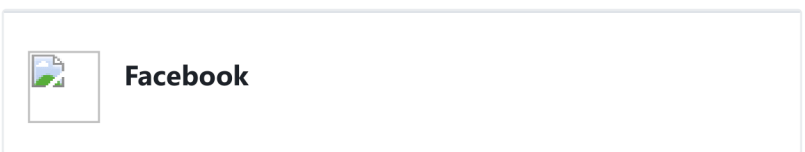


Why doesn't President Trump / Trump Administration try to do something with this especially when the US basically has Hindutva Foreign Agents and Unregistered Foreign Agents operating across our country raising funds and spreading Hinduphobia Propaganda and LIES while Hindutva is basically buying / influencing our bureaucrats and pols and meddling / interfering in our politics / elections which I have provided you evidence of in many of my other emails including Hindu Pols trying to get the President impeached with propaganda and lies such as those by Rep Thanedar , Rep Khanna , Rep Krishnamoorthi and want a be Congresswoman Purmina Nath

https://fb.watch/IbNrU2Wv70/

National People's Party

rSonsedotpta5mce66y0iM3sii5h6a0Y113d_g59rA f0e:tg84721ua78a



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Hon'ble Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, accompanied by a delegation of church and community leaders from Meghalaya, called on Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah in New Delhi to place before him the concerns regarding the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).
The delegation sought the Union Government's consideration in ensuring the smooth functioning of these institutions while safeguarding the interests of the people of Meghalaya. The Chief Minister also thanked the Hon'ble Home Minister for patiently hearing the concerns raised and reaffirmed the State Government's commitment to protecting the interests of its people and institutions.



Conrad K Sangma

ndoertpSos14attmd 3eA7ule79m65y 4ggl:8girh f13aaYam0h12fs05M ·
Called on Hon’ble Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah

Facebook

ji in New Delhi today, accompanied by a delegation of church and community leaders from Meghalaya, including representatives of the Presbyterian Church of India, the Catholic Church and the Garo Baptist Convention.
The delegation placed before the Hon’ble Home Minister the concerns regarding the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).
Sought the Union Government’s consideration in safeguarding the smooth functioning of these institutions and the interests of the people of the State, and thanked the Hon’ble Home Minister for a patient hearing.
The Government of Meghalaya remains committed to protecting the interests of its people and institutions.
See less



One of the biggest developments which helped uncover the injustices regarding Swami Laxmanananda's murder and against the Persecuted Christians of Kandhamal took place in Meghalaya when God answered our prayers and Anto Akkara gave his Release7innocent.com Presentation and then I bought his books, contacted him and started working with him which lead to the discover of new evidence to us (13 hours of interviews American Brannon Michael Parker made in India while illegally working for the RSS while in India on a Tourist Visa) , then recorded dialoogue with Parker and serious confessions and then several in person interviews and more confessions including Parker denouncing the report submitted to the US State Department.

All the evidence when put together helps prove they LIED about Kandhamal and justified and covered up the abuses against Christians by Hindutva.

And they have been meddling / interfering in our politics / elections for years including by helping build the Democrat Congressional Career of Tulsi Gabbard.

'INNOCENTS IMPRISONED' - Kandhamal's Travesty of Justice #antoakkara



7 Kandhamal Christians Freed After 11 Years' Imprisonment



Why is this being covered up ?

Christians don't coverup things like this they bring it to the LIGHT.

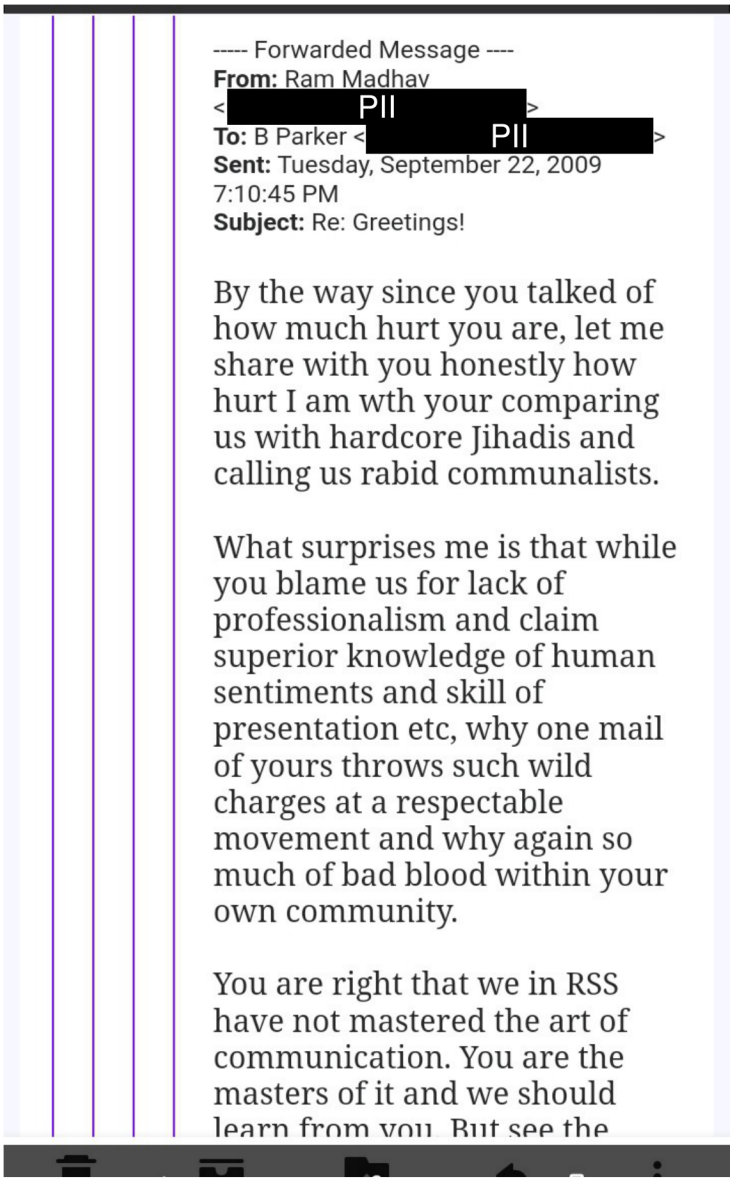
I had several angry email exchanges with Ram Madhav and said they turned my books look and format into a kind of Communist style agitprop. This really upset Ram Madhav. In the end a truncated version was made that included the work of others called Kandhamal - a fact file (I think)

I then selfpublished the report as I had finalized it calling it Orissa in the Crossfire - Kandhamal Burning.

Then in 2011 I finally went to Kandhamal itself and interviewed as many people I could on behalf of the RSS. This report was never made and I eventually uploaded all the interviews to youtube to make it available to the public or any researchers authorities etc.

After I accepted the invitation of a breakaway RSS faction to do a similar report on the Bangladeshi Hindus Ram Madhav and the RSS basically excommunicated me. Thus my 2nd report never made.

Coincidentally I have known Tulsi Gabbard since she was a kid and used to work for her dad. I therefore spent 2 years trying to convince the RSS to take her seriously. They finally did and when she won the 2012 election Ram Madhav called me from India to congratulate me and that was pretty much thenlast time ive heard from him or anyone in the RSS.



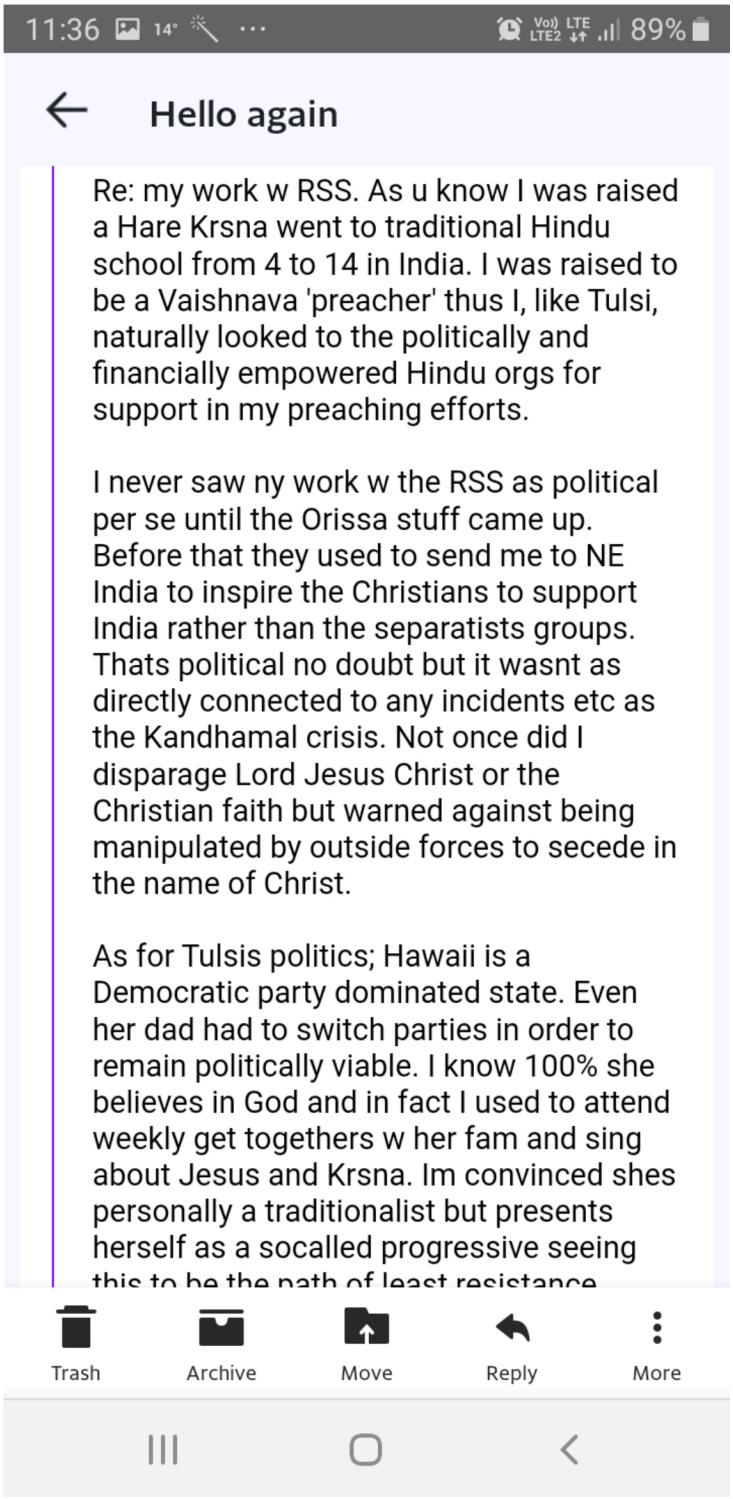
----- Forwarded Message ----
From: Ram Madhav
<[redacted]>
To: B Parker <[redacted]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2009 7:10:45 PM
Subject: Re: Greetings!

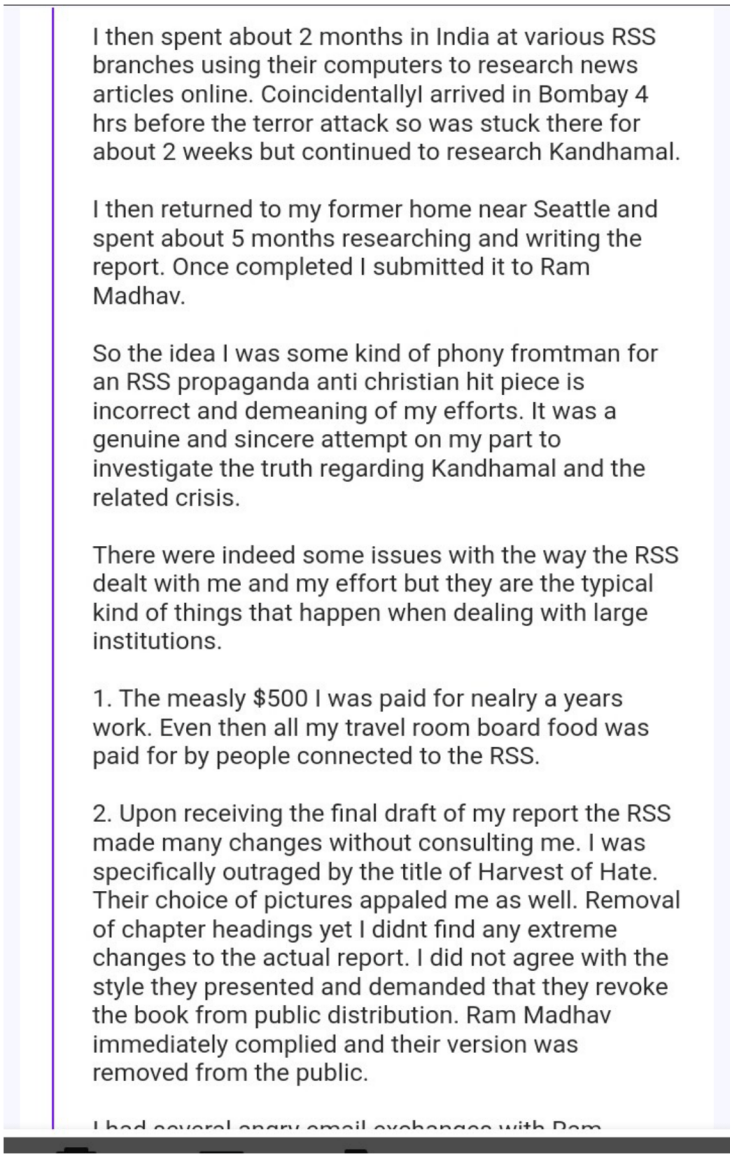
By the way since you talked of how much hurt you are, let me share with you honestly how hurt I am wth your comparing us with hardcore Jihadis and calling us rabid communalists.

What surprises me is that while you blame us for lack of professionalism and claim superior knowledge of human sentiments and skill of presentation etc, why one mail of yours throws such wild charges at a respectable movement and why again so much of bad blood within your own community.

You are right that we in RSS have not mastered the art of communication. You are the masters of it and we should learn from you. But see the

'Harvest of Hate' is an example of straight up communist style idealogically driven juvenile agit-prop. When I first saw the book my first instinct was one of rejection. This was based upon the title. What sane person wants anything to do with hate? It is ugly and unattractive and goes against every rule of successful propoganda and effective media promotion. It wins no hearts and convinces none. At best it adds to the many dust collecting publications that are read by none beyond those already convinced or those duty bound to read them.


11:36
89%
Hello again
Re: my work w RSS. As u know I was raised a Hare Krsna went to traditional Hindu school from 4 to 14 in India. I was raised to be a Vaishnava 'preacher' thus I, like Tulsi, naturally looked to the politically and financially empowered Hindu orgs for support in my preaching efforts.
I never saw ny work w the RSS as political per se until the Orissa stuff came up. Before that they used to send me to NE India to inspire the Christians to support India rather than the separatists groups. Thats political no doubt but it wasnt as directly connected to any incidents etc as the Kandhamal crisis. Not once did I disparage Lord Jesus Christ or the Christian faith but warned against being manipulated by outside forces to secede in the name of Christ.
As for Tulsis politics; Hawaii is a Democratic party dominated state. Even her dad had to switch parties in order to remain politically viable. I know 100% she believes in God and in fact I used to attend weekly get togethers w her fam and sing about Jesus and Krsna. Im convinced shes personally a traditionalist but presents herself as a socalled progressive seeing
Trash
Archive
Move
Reply
More



I then spent about 2 months in India at various RSS branches using their computers to research news articles online. Coincidentallyl arrived in Bombay 4 hrs before the terror attack so was stuck there for about 2 weeks but continued to research Kandhamal.

I then returned to my former home near Seattle and spent about 5 months researching and writing the report. Once completed I submitted it to Ram Madhav.

So the idea I was some kind of phony fromtman for an RSS propaganda anti christian hit piece is incorrect and demeaning of my efforts. It was a genuine and sincere attempt on my part to investigate the truth regarding Kandhamal and the related crisis.

There were indeed some issues with the way the RSS dealt with me and my effort but they are the typical kind of things that happen when dealing with large institutions.

1. The measly $500 I was paid for nealry a years work. Even then all my travel room board food was paid for by people connected to the RSS.

2. Upon receiving the final draft of my report the RSS made many changes without consulting me. I was specifically outraged by the title of Harvest of Hate. Their choice of pictures appaled me as well. Removal of chapter headings yet I didnt find any extreme changes to the actual report. I did not agree with the style they presented and demanded that they revoke the book from public distribution. Ram Madhav immediately complied and their version was removed from the public.

I had several angry email exchanges with Ram

Again one of the biggest developments took place in Meghalaya. Read summaries by Anto Akkara.

God Bless, Will Rogers

William Rogers – 'John the Baptist of Kandhamal' in the US

My crusade for Truth & Justice for Kandhamal's valiant Christians is replete with amazing biblical-like incidents with the Lord guiding my path for 17 years and stunning evidences falling in my path like manna in the desert to silence the mighty and ruling Hindu nationalists in the David versus Goliath fight, without any harm whatsoever throughout.

One such amazing episode in the Kandhamal voyage is how I got connected with William Rogers, a passionate Christian and a former US Marine, and how he has turned out to be *'John the Baptist of Kandhamal for the US'*. How we connected sounds like a biblical anecdote.

In early February 2018, I was in Guwahati (capital of Assam state - biggest city in the north east India) to speak on 'Kandhamal's Incredible Witness & Travesty of Justice' at the national assembly Signis India (Catholic forum of those in electronic media) with over 200 delegates. After that, I called on my key contacts there including Rev Laldawngliana, national moderator of the Presbyterian Church of India (PCI), who requested me to address the once in four year PCI national assembly in May first week at Haflong in Assam.

Gladly I accepted the proposal and booked my flight ticket (at my expense) two months in advance, which I seldom do. After the silver of our marriage on May 2, I flew from Kochi to Guwahati and called up the PCI moderator for the travel arrangement to Haflong. He stunned me saying that my session has been cancelled as the new executive (elected from each state) opposed my presentation at the last minute as the Hindu nationalist BJP had made big inroads in the PCI elections with its money power, getting candidate friendly to the Hindu nationalists winning the key church posts, who were aware of my spirited advocacy on Kandhamal from 2009.

I was stunned and disappointed as I had declined an invitation later to address a huge charismatic convention in Bangalore on the same days. I also did not know what to do with the 500 books I had sent by courier at big expense from New Delhi for the PCI assembly which would gather 30,000 on the final day. Five days later, I had fixed a program at Darjeeling mountains and so, I could not go to Bangalore with last minute prohibitive summer fares.

(I have gone through several such reversals in the Kandhamal crusade but I was always convinced that the Lord will find me a way out).

Then I had the inspiration to call up Archbishop Dominic Jala (who died in a road accident in the US in 2019) of Shillong, 60 miles from Guwahati and capital of Christian Meghalaya state.

"I will not be there. But don't worry. I will tell the Cathedral vicar to make you speak during all the five Sunday masses," Archbishop Jala, fond of my Kandhamal advocacy, assured me.

So, I hired a van and carried nearly 200 books to Shillong and duly spoke at the end of all the 5 Masses – three at the Cathedral with local Khasi language service and two at the Grotto church down with English service. While Catholic

youth managed the sale of my books at the Cathedral, at the Grotto, it was my Kerala classmate Joe Chirayil, married to a Khasi lady and working in local school, who took care of the books. When I came down for the final English Mass, Joe told me: "An American was impressed by what you said in the church and has taken your books and he will contact you."

Soon I got an email from William Rogers, an evangelical who had come to the church with his Catholic wife who is from Shillong. Without naming the Hindu nationalists (inside churches, I do not mention political names), l shared diplomatically how 'those behind the Kandhamal bloodshed and travesty of justice had fooled' - to attack the Christians alleging Christians killed the Hindu swami - the people of Kandhamal, Odisha, India and even the whole world led by the US. Fraudulent and concocted books were made to cover up Kandhamal and this was presented to even the US State department to fool them."

Rogers went through my books carefully and got excited with the 'Parker fraud' I had exposed in nationally acclaimed 'Who Killed Swami Lakshmanananda?'

Ghost US authors & State Department fooled: While pursuing the saga of the seven Christians being tried for the sensational murder, I had stumbled upon the mammoth fraud behind Kandhamal. Two 'US authors' - Michael Parker and Brannon Parker - are supposed to have authored one and the same book on Kandhamal under different titles:

The '*Harvest of Hate Kandhamal in Crossfire*' by Seattle-based Michael Parker was published by the *India Foundation* in 2009. The bulky book carried a '*Publisher's Note*' by *India Foundation* director Nirmala Sitharaman (presently finance minister of India) and published from a flat registered in the name of Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor of India for the third time with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In her introduction to *'Harvest of Hate – Kandhamal in Crossfire'*, Sitharaman, described the author Michael Parker as *'born in India'* while the profile at the end of the book declared that Parker was '*born in the US'!*

The same Michael Parker book has been subsequently marketed as '*ORISSA in the CROSSFIRE - Kandhamal Burning*' by Brannon Parker:

"In August 2009, this report was presented to the US State Department by Ram Madhav, National Executive of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha (RSS)," confirmed Brannon Parker in his preface to the reincarnated work. That confirmed how the Hindu nationalists tried to fool even the US State Department about Kandhamal!

Thrilled by these revelations. Rogers was in touch with me and came to New Delhi with my classmate Joe for the launch of the thrilling documentary '**Innocents Imprisoned'** that was released on Aug 23, 2018 – on the 10th anniversary of Kandhamal – at the Constitution Club of India.

Roger also bought 40 copies of my book *'Who Killed Swami Lakshmanananda?'* and carried them to the US and managed to trace after much hard work the real Parker – Brannon Parker based in Seattle and established contact with him.

A year later, in August 2019, I flew to New York to address Indian NGO forum at the UN and had to address an Indian Conference in San Francisco where Rogers joined me and drove me in his car all the way to Seattle to meet Brannon Parker. In mid-September, I met the mysterious author Brannon Parker in Seattle, who confided to me that he too had been 'fooled' by top Hindu nationalist leaders to be a partner in the Kandhamal cover-up and he was trapped to write lies about the Christians after he was taken to Odisha soon after the Kandhamal bloodshed, introducing him to 'ghost' celebrities to prepare the cover-up book.

After visiting Roger's house near Sacramento, we travelled together to Washington at his expense and met many big guys before I returned to India.

But for the biblical connection with Rogers, I would not have succeeded in this mission to get bail for all the Seven Innocent Christians. Though two had been given bail by the Supreme Court in May and July, the sudden bail for all the remaining five came from the Supreme Court of India on 26 November, 2019 after I made social media posts about the US visit and meeting the REAL PARKER.

Enthused by this big breakthrough, Rogers has since turned into a true researcher, pursuing the Octopus like hold of Hindu nationalists in the US political system.

It is certainly worth interviewing Rogers.

Anto Akkara
Kindly sign the petition for 'Justice for 7 Innocents of Kandhamal' at
www.release7innocents.com



Kandhamal Fraud & Travesty of Justice

Following the mysterious murder of 81-year-old Swami Lakshmanananda Saraswati on August 23, 2008, Christian targets in Kandhamal district of Odisha went up in flames. Nearly 100 Christians were killed, and 300 churches and 6,000 houses were plundered in unabated violence rendering 56,000 homeless.

When the Swami was assassinated on the *Janmashtami night,* his trusted bodyguard was missing and police guards ran away. Doctors who were rushed from far off centres were asked to 'hurry up' with the token postmortem held in the Ashram compound itself in the night. Even before the sunrise, preparations were complete for the zigzag funeral procession crisscrossing Kandhamal for two days calling for revenge on Christians.

Within hours of Swami's murder, four Christians including a 13-year old illiterate boy were picked up by Saffron henchmen, thrashed and dumped in police stations – after inserting the Bible and a knife in their bag. It was VHP leader Praveen Togadia who announced the names of 'Swami's killers', and not the police. That is how the nation was fooled about the 'Christian conspiracy' behind the Swami's murder.

When the police could not fix the 'first batch of killers' who had been detained for 40 days, they were let off with a declaration: "Due to fear, we had taken shelter in police station" – to absolve the police.

Then the investigation team arrested the 'second batch of killers' - 7 innocent Christians – six of them illiterates including a mentally challenged - from remote jungles in two batches. During the four years of trial of the accused in the Fast Tract Court, hardly any worthwhile evidence was brought before the two judges. Biranchi N Mishra, the judge who had presided over the final two years of the trial, was transferred in 2013 before delivering the verdict.

Mishra, the judge, had pulled up the prosecution several times prodding why they wanted to keep the accused in detention and even recorded that the conduct of the Investigating Officer was '*deplorable*'. Ironically, the Investigating Officer Santosh Kumar Patnaik, Crime Branch SP, was conferred with the *Police Medal* after the justice Mishra made this adverse remark.

I had called on Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde (along with Digvijaya Singh) in mid-2013, requesting him to order an NIA inquiry into Kandhamal due to the bizarre situation: *Fast Track trial over, judge transferred, court shut down and innocents behind bars.*

In response, Home Minister Shinde said: *'Let the IB (Intelligence Bureau) investigate first'*. The Hindu nationalists (Sangh Parivar) must have got wind of it and that explained why the shocking verdict - convicting the 7 innocent Christians to life imprisonment - was delivered abruptly by a newly appointed third judge R K Tosh in September 2013. Glancing through the shocking judgment, a top jurist told me, it was *'written outside'*.

The bail plea of the convicts was bluntly dismissed by the Odisha High Court a second time on December 4, 2018 while their appeal against their conviction continued to drag on in the same court with judges being shuffled frequently – it still goes on.

Surprisingly, the same police officers who had ensured the conviction of the innocent Christians told the Justice Naidu Commission in 2015 that the much trumpeted 'Christian conspiracy' theory was baseless.

Why was the Swami killed?
"*The actual intention of the Europe, US, the Pope and Sonia Gandhi was to convert the entire region into the independent Christian land. God has sent me from Himalaya, and it was stalled. That is why their campaign was to drive away swamiji and create a Christian land. As long as I am alive I shall not let you do that*" - Swami Laxmanananda had boasted years before his murder to a saffron friendly media

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team. This has been cited as proof in the documentary '*The Agony of Kandhamal*' - produced by the dubious *India Foundation* that has masterminded the Kandhamal cover-up.
The **Swami's claim** is parroted in various saffron statements on the murder from day one. Since the Swami had named even the Pope and Sonia Gandhi as people who considered him a threat to the Christianization of Kandhamal, it was easy to spread the rumor that Christians had killed him.

Hence, a contract killing was commissioned by Sangh Parivar. That explained the various claims and denials of Maoist role in the murder. RSS henchman at the grassroots, Parbat Panigrahi who played a key role locally in the execution of the conspiracy had to pay with his life.

The Sangh Parivar's wild calculation was that when the Christians in Kandhamal were brutalized, the international Christian lobby led by the Pope would persuade Sonia Gandhi (of Italian Catholic origin) as chairperson of the ruling UPA to dismiss the Odisha government in which the BJP was a coalition partner at the time. That would pave way for the BJP to sweep the 2009 election – with the propaganda that Mrs Gandhi was '*Papa ki Beti*' (Pope's daughter to Christianize India). But the intelligence agencies got the wind of this outlandish conspiracy and the UPA did not step on the Kandhamal landmine. This was confirmed to me from UN corridors.

Cover up that exposes the conspiracy:
When its grandiose scheme fell flat, Sangh Parivar leadership launched an orchestrated cover up under the *'India Foundation'*. While pursuing the poignant saga of seven innocent Christians being tried for the sensational murder, I stumbled upon the mammoth fraud from documents 'gifted' by Ram Madhav, then RSS spokesperson.

The bundle of secret saffron products that Madhav gifted - foolishly and arrogantly - to Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, then KCBC president, during a visit in 2012 blew the lid off the Kandhamal fraud. The double Parkers (Michael and Brannon) are supposed to have authored one and the same book on Kandhamal under different titles.

The '*Harvest of Hate - Kandhamal in Crossfire*' by Michael Parker was published by the India Foundation in 2009. The bulky book carried a '*Publisher's Note*' by India Foundation director Nirmala Sitharaman, presently Finance Minister. In her introduction to *'Harvest of Hate'*, Sitharaman, described Michael Parker as *'born in India'* while the profile at the end of the book declared that Parker was '*born in the US*!

The same Michael Parker book is now being marketed as '*ORISSA in the CROSSFIRE - Kandhamal Burning*' by Brannon Parker. *"In August 2009, this report was presented to the US State Department by Ram Madhav, a National Executive of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha,"* confirms Brannon Parker in his preface to the reincarnated work.

On the trail of Kandhamal fraud
In the pursuit of justice for seven innocent convicts, I went through the 348-page *'Harvest of Hate*'. Then, I cross checked it with the copycat edition '*ORISSA in the CROSSFIRE - Kandhamal Burning*' by Brannon Parker – the e-book I had downloaded from the internet after paying US$ 11 in 2012.

Since the fanciful publisher had no contact numbers, the only option was to contact the address of the *India Foundation* that was printed in *'Harvest of Hate'*. The persistent venture gave me the shock of my life in October 2015. What I presumed would be an anonymous flat - *343, Chandanwadi Apartment, Sector 10, Dwarka, New Delhi 110 045* - turned out to be owned by none other than Ajit Kumar Doval, National Security Advisor!

That made me scrutinize the set of books and DVDs gifted by Madhav to KCBC president Archbishop Thazhath who had handed them over to me since I happened to be in my hometown on the day and had contacted him with a journalistic query minutes before Madhav arrived. Three years after I got the golden treasure, the explosive value of the RSS products dawned on me in late 2015. Among the various India Foundation products was the DVD titled '*The Agony of Kandhamal*' - portraying Hindus as

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the victims and that too by forging testimonies of battered Christian victims and masquerading them as Hindu victims.
Shockingly, even the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has played a dubious role in the Kandhamal cover up. Despite the massive bloodshed and brutality heaped on a hapless minority, NHRC has not issued even a press release on Kandhamal in 11 years while its investigative reports on the violence read like press release of Sangh Parivar.

During my investigative trip to the US in September 2019, I met the mysterious author Brannon Parker in Seattle (with the support William Rogers who had traced him) and Brannon confided to me that he too had been lured by top Hindu nationalist leaders to be a partner in the Kandhamal cover-up – fooling the US besides European Union, China and Russia. Michael Parker was his father's name. He also confirmed the role of top guys like NSA Doval behind the Kandhamal cover up under the banner of India Foundation – **abusing the name of the nation**.

Since Parker authors had cited *'in my interview with Rajaram Satpathy'*, chief of Bureau of the *Times of India* in Bhubaneswar, I met Satpathy who categorically told me that *"I have not even heard about the Parkers let alone meeting them.*" When I showed Satpathy's photo, Brannon Parker told me that *'This is not the Satpathy I met.'* That is Sangh Parivar!

'Who Killed Swami Laxmanananda?' The investigative book with Foreword by Kuldip Nayar, patriarch of Indian Journalism, exposed the Travesty of Justice and Sangh Parivar Fraud and '*demolished*' the Christian conspiracy theory as the '*Telegraph*' daily put it: Kandhamal tale in new light. The investigative book is a collection of stunning evidences that I have been falling in my path like manna desert during 31 arduous trips to Kandhamal and elsewhere in the pursuit of truth and justice for the voiceless people.

Online signature campaign for Kandhamal's 7 Innocents: Pursuing the stunning evidences gathered during arduous research, an online signature campaign for the release of the hapless Christians languishing in jail with **www.release7innocents.com** in New Delhi on 3 March 2016 with the illiterate wives of the seven innocent Christians and a host of national celebrities. Each online signature generates four instant emails to the Chief Justice of India, the President of India, the Chairman of the NHRC and the Chief Justice of Odisha High Court. The campaign has already drawn 83,400 signatures.

The documentary **'Innocents Imprisoned'** – released on the 10th anniversary of Kandhamal in August 2018 - is the visual presentation of Kandhamal's Travesty of Justice. Besides the English version, the documentary that calls for endorsing online petition for the release of the seven innocents has been already dubbed into **Odia , Hindi** and **Malayalam.** The documentary inspired the *THE WIRE* (India's leading critical news portal) interview - **10 Years of Kandhamal Riots: "7 Innocents Have Been Convicted," Says Anto Akkara.**

Innocents languish behind bars:
The seven innocent Christians - including a mentally challenged – had been languishing in jail for a crime they never committed - leaving a blot on the judicial system of the country. The judiciary remained under pressure from Hindu nationalists to cover up their fraud. Since they claimed the Swami's killing was a Christian conspiracy, Christians must be behind bars. That explained why the Innocent Christians had to languish behind bars for 11 years even without bail.

While Gornath Chalenseth and Bijay Kumar Sanseth - two of the seven innocents – had been granted bail by the Supreme Court in May and July 2019, the bail applications of the remaining five - Bhaskar Sunamajhi, Buddhadeb Nayak, Durjo Sunamajhi, Munda Badamajhi and Sanathan Badamajhi were getting adjourned repeatedly even in the Supreme Court – exposing how the saffron octopus had spread its tentacles into the higher judicial system. The routine hearing on the bail applications of the Innocents were adjourned repeatedly - not by judges but by the Registrar of the Supreme Court!

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The judicial farce even in the Supreme Court ended after I pointed out in a facebook post of November 21: **"When will the Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court fix the 'COMPUTER' bug in the Registrar's Office that has been adjourning repeatedly the bail pleas of Kandhamal's remaining five INNOCENTS?"**

It is a fact that the bail order for the remaining five Innocents came five days later on November 26, 2019 - the next 'computer generated' date of hearing.

Campaign for 'Justice for 7 Innocents of Kandhamal':
Following the bail for the five, Akkara rushed to Kandhamal to receive the *'Innocents coming out of jail', parade them before the media*, and revise the campaign to 'Justice for 7 Innocents of Kandhamal'.

In February 2020, Akkara brought the Seven Innocents on bail to Bangalore at great risk. Presenting the seven Pentecostal illiterates before the assembly of nearly 200 Catholic bishops in India, Akkara reminded them about the silence of the Christian community to the 'innocents' due to fear of the ruling BJP.

"Faith must lead to Action," urged Akkara, calling for solidarity in the fight for justice for the 'Innocents' of Kandhamal.

Sadly, illiterate & mentally challenged Munda Badamajhi – among the 7 Innocents, died of stroke complications in March 2025

The Faith story of Kandhamal:

Early Christians of 21st Century

chronicles the incredible witness amid brutal persecution

Released in February 2018, the revised edition chronicles the incredible Christian witness amid brutal persecution. The book highlights how homeless Christians turned their 'losses into gains' amid saffron foot-soldiers insisting on thousands of Christians to forsake faith to return to their villages.

They chose to languish in dingy slums than to turn their back to Christ and gave sterling testimony as true followers of Christ who gladly carried the cross without running away from it. History repeats itself. Like the *'Early Christians'*, the poor but valiant Christians of Kandhamal sacrificed everything for their faith amid brutal persecution and carved out the most glorious moment since Apostle St. Thomas sowed the seeds of Christianity in India. Astounded by the amazing witness, even the assailants are flocking to churches to profess the faith they tried to banish from Kandhamal. The Kandhamal Christians have given the Waterloo experience to the mighty Hindu nationalists and catacomb experience to cynical Christians in the 21st century.

The rock-like faith of even illiterate Christians inspired the journalist to make 31 arduous trips to Kandhamal to document the incredible testimony of the zealous Christians. For holding on to their faith amid diabolic cruelty, rampant impunity and state apathy, the author aptly calls Kandhamal Christians '*Early Christians of 21st Century*'. Review links:

Cardinal Filoni releases book on Kandhamal stories

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Christians Shamefully Persecuted in India

They Looked Into the Face of Evil but Found the Courage of Their Faith

Persecuted Indian Christians Evangelize…by Forgiving

Profile:

With masters in English literature, post graduate diploma in journalism and LL.B from Delhi University, Anto Akkara has been a journalist with international media for a quarter century. The journalist author who firmly believes that 'the pen is mightier than the sword' has reported extensively from hotspots in South Asia on human rights concerns, religious issues and social problems.

He has covered extensively from the ground the massive Gujarat earthquake, 2004 tsunami devastation, Sri Lankan war, oppression in Myanmar, and birth of democracy and devastating earthquake that struck Nepal in 2015. In the process, he was won a dozen national and international media awards.

He has to his credit several 'leader' articles for the Times of India - like '*tribals are not museum pieces*', '*open prison called Myanmar*' and '*Lankan landmine*' etc - on sensitive topics and his international investigative reports have been carried even in *Washington Post* and *New York Times*.

For his *'stellar work*' on Kandhamal, the author was conferred in October 2013 the prestigious ***Titus Brandsma Award for Journalism***, instituted in memory of a bold Dutch journalist who was incarcerated by the Nazis for criticizing Hitler and died in the Dachau concentration camp in 1942, and canonized by Vatican in 2022.

From the Covid epidemic times, Akkara has done several documentaries on the incredible witness of Kandhamal in English besides other languages:

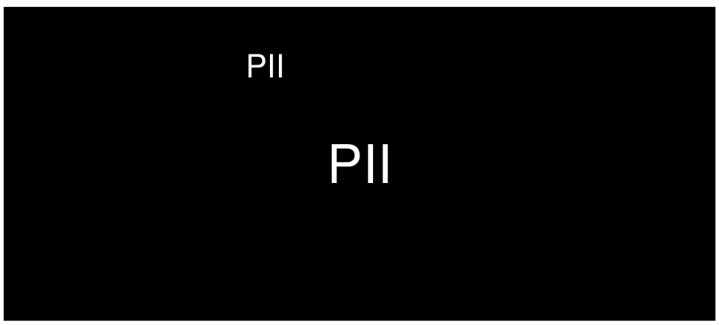
1. Heroic Witness from Kandhamal
2. Rock-like Faith of Kandhamal
3. Martyrs of Kandhamal
4. Release of Kandhamal's 7 Innocents & Power of Prayer
5. Right Hand of Gold over Kandhamal *(most viral with 239,111 views)*
6. Good News of Kandhamal
7. Martyrs of Kandhamal on the Path to Sainthood

Contact:

Anto Akkara

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* Unique Advocacy for Truth & Justice for Kandhamal

With Masters in English literature, Diploma in Journalism and LL. B from Delhi University, **Anto Akkara** has been a journalist for three decades with international media. The 57-year-old journalist has reported extensively from hotspots in South Asia on human rights, religious issues and social problems. He has to his credit several 'leader' articles for the *Times of India* and his wire reports have been carried even by *The Washington Post*.

Akkara reported extensively from the ground the 2004 tsunami devastation in South Asia, protracted ethnic war in Sri Lanka, oppression in Myanmar, birth of democracy and devastating earthquake of 2015 in Nepal, winning over a dozen national and international media awards.

David vs Goliath Fight for Truth & Justice for Kandhamal:
When the national media forgot the simmering anti-Christian violence in remote Kandhamal jungles of eastern Odisha state in 2008, Akkara stirred the nation's conscience with his investigative book: ***Kandhamal - a blot on Indian Secularism***.

(Christian targets across Kandhamal went up in flames following the murder of Hindu Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati on August 23, 2008. Weeks of unabated violence, triggered by the propaganda that the Hindu leader's murder was a Christian conspiracy, left nearly 100 Christians dead, 300 churches and 6,000 Christian houses plundered rendering 56,000 Christians homeless with the state mandarins remaining spectators.)

P. Chidambaram, the Home Minister of India had a personal audience with the author following the headlines the book made and visited Kandhamal soon after receiving the book. Chidambaram even told Indian Parliament in July 2009 that what happened in Kandhamal was '*a blot on the face of Orissa'* – quoting the title of the book.

The journalist's maiden book had been provoked by government officials' refusal to register criminal cases even in murders. In three weeks after the release of the book, Odisha government acknowledged five murders highlighted in it, paving way for Rs half a million ($ 6,800) compensation to each of the dependant families. Despite his goal being achieved on 'unacknowledged murders', Akkara continued to pursue Kandhamal with frequent trips to the remote region.

Hindu nationalist conspiracy: Soon after the Swami's murder, four Christians had been beaten up and dumped in police station by Hindu bigots, after inserting the Bible and a knife in their bags. It was World Hindu Council leader Praveen Togadia who announced the names of 'Swami's Christian killers' and not the police.

The police released them after 40 days and arrested seven 'innocent' Christians - six of them illiterates including a mentally challenged. After four years of trial, the second judge too who had questioned the prosecution was transferred in 2013 and court was shut down before the verdict.

Soon, Akkara called on Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde in New Delhi, requesting a federal inquiry into Kandhamal due to the bizarre situation: *Fast Track trial over, judge transferred, court shut down and innocents behind bars.*

With shocking revelations, the journalist brought out ***'Kandhamal craves for Justice***' on the 5th anniversary in 2013, exposing the travesty of justice: a single conviction in 29 murder trials completed while 'innocent' Christians languished behind bars on trumped up murder charge.

The BJP rode to power after the May 2014 election. Yet, Akkara continued his pursuit and forayed deep into remote jungles to meet the illiterate wives of the 'innocents'. The Hindu neighbours too vouched for their innocence. The scrutiny of dozens of court documents, dubious books and videos from *'India Foundation',* led by BJP stalwarts, confirmed the Hindu nationalist conspiracy.

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The journalist author came out with the masterpiece of his arduous research on Kandhamal '***Who Killed Swami Laxmanananda?*** in May 2016, silencing the ruling Hindu nationalists with stunning evidence.

'Kandhamal tale in new light', wrote '*The Telegraph'* English daily about the investigative book that read like a detective novel decoding the mystery behind the murder of the Hindu leader on a sacred Hindu festival night and why seven 'innocent' Christians languished in jail for the murder.

Why was the Swami killed?: "*The actual intention of the Europe, US, the Pope and Sonia Gandhi was to convert the entire region into the independent Christian land. God has sent me from Himalaya, and it was stalled. That is why their campaign was to drive away swami and create a Christian land. As long as I am alive I shall not let you do that*"- Swami Laxmanananda had boasted years before his murder. This claim was cited as proof in the documentary '*The Agony of Kandhamal*' - produced by the *India Foundation* that anchored the Kandhamal cover-up.

Since the Swami had named even the Pope and Sonia Gandhi as people who considered him a threat to the Christianization of Kandhamal, it was easy to spread the conspiracy theory that Christians had killed him. Hence, a contract killing was commissioned.

When the Christians in Kandhamal were brutalized after Swami's murder, the Hindu Nationalist leadership expected, the international Christian lobby led by the Pope would persuade Sonia Gandhi (of Italian Catholic origin) as chairperson of the ruling federal coalition to dismiss the Odisha government in which the BJP was a coalition partner at the time. That would pave way for the BJP to sweep the 2009 election – with the propaganda that Mrs. Gandhi was '*Papa ki Beti*' (Pope's daughter to Christianize India).

But the intelligence agencies got the wind of this outlandish conspiracy and cautioned the federal government against stepping on the Kandhamal landmine.

Cover up that exposed the conspiracy: When the grandiose scheme fell flat, top Hindu nationalists launched an elaborate cover up under the *'India Foundation',* producing ghost books and documentaries on Kandhamal. As if in a fairy tale, these dubious products reached Akkara from Ram Madhav, spokesperson of Hindu nationalist network and BJP general secretary!

The '*Harvest of Hate - Kandhamal in Crossfire*' by Michael Parker was published by the *India Foundation* in 2009. The book carried a '*Publisher's Note*' by *India Foundation* director Nirmala Sitharaman (presently Finance Minister of India) who described Michael Parker as *'born in India'* while the profile at the end of the book declared that Parker was '*born in the US'*!

"In August 2009, this report was presented to the US State Department by Ram Madhav, a National Executive of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha," confirmed Brannon Parker who later published the same book with minor modifications as '*ORISSA in the CROSSFIRE - Kandhamal Burning*'.

Since the *'India Foundation'* had listed no phone number, the intrepid journalist reached the address printed in *'Harvest of Hate'*: 343, Chandanwadi Apartment, Sector 10, Dwarka, New Delhi 110 045. This venture gave him the shock of his life. The flat was owned by *Ajit Kumar Doval, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's top strategist as the National Security Advisor*!

(In September 2019, Akkara met Brannon Parker at Seattle with the help of US national William Rogers who had traced Brannon. In this meeting, Brannon confirmed that he was 'fooled' into the Kandhamal cover-up book by Ram Madhav and wrote even 'lies' about the Christians.)

Caught red-handed in the Kandhamal cover-up, *India Foundation* has recast itself to exorcise the Kandhamal ghost from haunting it by shunning the word 'Kandhamal' itself on its website.

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The stunning findings of ***'Who Killed Swami Laxmanananda?'*** **-** released in major cities with eminent jurists, writers, and activists – made the media highlight the travesty of justice with headlines:

- *Book questions conviction of Christians in Kandhamal violence*
- *New Book Reignites Questions Over Alleged Cover-Up of Kandhamal Killings*
- *Christian community falsely framed in Saraswati killing: Book*
- *Book On Kandhamal 'A Wake-Up Call For The Nation'*
- *Odia media rewrites Kandhamal script*
- *Kerala CM demands fresh probe into death of Swami Laxmanananda*

This relentless campaign has baffled many as the vociferous Hindu nationalist clan led by the ruling BJP has not uttered a word against Akkara nor challenged the charges raised by the fearless journalist repeatedly naming even top BJP government officials as Kandhamal 'conspirators.

Such has been the impact of the book that after reading the book, a retired judge of Odisha High Court *(FYI only - Justice A S Naidu whose report of the Kandhamal Inquiry Commission not yet made public)* called the author for a meeting and said: *"I have gone through your book. Congratulations."*

Online signature campaign for Kandhamal's 7 Innocents: Prior to the release of the investigative book, the journalist author discretely brought the illiterate wives of the seven '*innocents'* on March 3, 2016 to New Delhi to launch the *online signature campaign* for the release of their husbands in the presence of a host of national celebrities.

(The dignitaries including opposition political leaders were stunned when the crew of half a dozen TV channels left on 'urgent call' minutes before the launch of the campaign, indicating that powerful forces were trying to black out the campaign. The crusader had several censorship experiences including his email account getting disrupted in critical moments ahead of his programs.)

The bold campaign, bordering on 'contempt of court' for challenging the judicial system, generates four instant emails from each online signature to *the Chief Justice of India, the President of India, the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission and the Chief Justice of Odisha High Court*.

In follow up, Akkara released the stunning documentary *'INNOCENTS IMPRISONED'* on the 10th anniversary of Kandhamal on 23 August 2018. Visual presentation of Kandhamal's travesty of justice, the documentary calls for endorsing the online petition, the documentary has been dubbed into key *Odia, Hindi* and *Malayalam* languages.

The 17-minute documentary inspired *THE WIRE* (critical news portal) interview - *10 Years of Kandhamal Riots: "7 Innocents Have Been Convicted," Says Anto Akkara.* The bare-all interview exposed why the 'innocents' including a mentally challenged continued to languish in jail for a crime they never committed.

Bail for the 'Innocents': After the Odisha High Court rejected bail to them a second time on December 4, 2018 – contrary to norms laid down by the Supreme Court, Christian legal networks moved the federal Supreme Court challenging the denial of bail.

When the Supreme Court granted bail to Gornath Chalanseth, Akkara rushed to Kandhamal to receive the first 'innocent' coming out in May 21. Two months later, Bijay Kumar Sanseth too was granted bail by the Supreme Court.

However, the bail applications of the remaining five - Bhaskar Sunamajhi, Buddhadeb Nayak, Durjo Sunamajhi, Munda Badamajhi and Sanathan Badamajhi - got adjourned repeatedly in the Supreme Court. The routine hearing on the bail applications were adjourned repeatedly - not by judges but by the office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court!

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Akkara challenged this judicial farce in a November 21 Facebook post: *"When will the Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court fix the 'COMPUTER' bug in the Registrar's Office that has been adjourning repeatedly the bail pleas of Kandhamal's remaining five INNOCENTS?"* (Coincidence or not, the bail order for the remaining five 'Innocents' from the Supreme Court came five days later on November 26 - the next '*computer generated*' date of hearing.)

Campaign for 'Justice for 7 Innocents of Kandhamal': Following the bail for the five, Akkara cut short a reporting trip to Europe and rushed to Kandhamal to receive the *'Innocents coming out of jail', parade them before the media*, and revise the campaign to 'Justice for 7 Innocents of Kandhamal'.

Kandhamal Faith Saga: The journalist author, who has also chronicled the incredible witness of Kandhamal Christians with '***Shining Faith in Kandhamal***' in 2009 and followed it up with '***Early Christians of 21st Century***' that was released by Cardinal Fernando Filoni, president of Vatican's Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples at Indian bishops' assembly in 2013.

The book highlights how homeless Christians turned their 'losses into gains' amid saffron foot-soldiers blackmailing thousands of Christians to forsake faith to return to their villages. They chose to languish in dingy slums than to turn their back to Christ and gave sterling testimony as true followers of Christ who gladly carried the cross without running away from it (Mat 16:24).

History repeats itself. As in the *'Early Christians'* era, hardly any Christian gave up their faith while hundreds of Hindus including those who tormented the Christians have been flocking to churches to profess the faith they tried to banish from Kandhamal. The poor but Christians have defeated and silenced the mighty Hindu nationalists.

Akkara is a witness to their incredible witness. His fractured leg was healed miraculously on the New Year Day of 2012 at the spot where the first martyr of Kandhamal – a paralyzed youth Rasanand Pradhan - had been torched alive. With the fracture, Akkara believes God made him sit to work with full concentration on ***'Early Christians of 21st Century'*** when he was handicapped. When he went to Kandhamal eight months later to verify some crucial facts ignoring doctor's caution, he had a biblical healing at the martyrdom spot of the paralyzed youth.

A missionary friend asked Akkara to include this testimony in the book "*since you are a witness to their faith."* With the doctor too confirming his miraculous healing, Cardinal Oswald Gracias who has written the Foreword promptly approved insertion of this *'author's testimony'* titled: *'Woe to me unless I preach the Good News"*. That is what Akkara has done all these years. The rock-like faith of even illiterate Christians inspired him to accompany them to document their incredible testimony.

The political outcome of this unique pilgrimage is the fulfilment of the Gospel assurance of Luke 12:2: *"Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known."*

For holding on to their faith amid diabolic cruelty, rampant impunity and state apathy, Kandhamal Christians deserve the title '*Early Christians of 21st Century*':
Cardinal Filoni releases book on Kandhamal stories
Christians Shamefully Persecuted in India
They Looked Into the Face of Evil but Found the Courage of Their Faith
Persecuted Indian Christians Evangelize…by Forgiving
In February 2020, Akkara brought the Seven Innocents on bail to Bangalore at great risk. Presenting the seven Pentecostal illiterates before the assembly of nearly 200 Catholic bishops in India, Akkara reminded them about the silence of the Christian community to the 'innocents' due to fear of the ruling BJP.

"Faith must lead to Action," urged Akkara, calling for solidarity in the fight for justice for the 'Innocents' of Kandhamal. END [redacted]

DOJ-RLC Comment-020702

From: "Steve Brokaw" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - General Comment - Stephen Brokaw.
Date: Mon, 06 Jul 2026 18:19:45 -0400
Importance: Normal

Religious liberty is the foundation of our country, and our country is based on Christian values. It must be prioritized and protected. Our country cannot continue unless the government gets out of the way of religious practice. The wall of separation of church and state must be completely torn down, as it violates the Constitution. I agree with the observations and conclusions of the Draft Report of the Presidential Religious Liberty Commission. I urge that you adopt the report in a final form, and that actions be taken by this administration to implement its suggestions. Thank you for your hard work, and for your attention to this matter!

Steve Brokaw
“Let our nation be glad and sing for joy”
cf Psalm 67:4

From: "Donna M D'Amico" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – TOPIC: The Johnson Amendment of 1954 – Donna D'Amico
Date: Mon, 06 Jul 2026 19:07:28 -0400
Importance: Normal

The Johnson Amendment of 1954 must not be repealed. The tax exempt status of nonprofit organizations, including religious institutions, is only given as long as those organizations refrain from endorsing or opposing political candidates. This law is a mechanism for protecting religious liberty. By preventing partisanship from infiltrating the pulpit, it stops religious institutions from becoming tools for political influence. The law helps to protect charities from partisan coercion. If an organization has a need for more free speech, then they need to give up their tax exempt status.

From: Ian Bixby <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – [Religious Freedom] – [Ian]
Date: Mon, 06 Jul 2026 22:52:15 -0400
Importance: Normal

The United States government has always been, and will always remain, a secular institution. All Americans are free to choose whether to believe in religion or not. No one religion shall have domain (ie Christianity).

Thank you,

Ian

From: Robert Hart <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Separation of Church and State – Robert Hart
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 00:53:44 -0400
Importance: Normal

July 6, 2026

Via Electronic Mail to [redacted]

Presidential Commission on Religious Liberty
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Room 5706
Washington, DC 20530

Re: Presidential Commission on Religious Liberty Draft Report

Dear Chair Patrick, Vice Chair Dr. Carson, and the members of the Religious Liberty Commission:

I agree with all of Pillar of Freedom's comments made by Attorney Jonathan Zirkle except for one: repealing the Johnson Amendment. I agree with the commission's recommendation to repeal said amendment. The Johnson Amendment restricts free speech. As such, it is a restriction of liberty. Therefore, please implement all of Attorney Zirkle's carefully thought out comments except for his comments about the Johnson Amendment.

In addition, I encourage all commission members/interested parties to read *The Great Controversy.* It was written by America's most published author, Ellen White. It lays out a detailed history of church/state persecution and a vision of its prophetic re-emergence in the land of the free and the home of the brave. Dr. Ben Carson is familiar with this book and I believe he would encourage you to do the same.

For those with limited time or shorter attention spans, I encourage reading *National Sunday Law* by A. Jan Marcussen. It can be read free on-line and is similar to a "cliff notes" version of later chapters of *The Great Controversy.*

Sincerely,

Robert Hart
Arrowsmith, IL

From: Sara McDougall <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 04:42:51 -0400
Importance: Normal

Historical Context

Religious liberty is one of the most consequential and contested subjects in American history. It deserves to be approached with historical rigor and careful attention to the complexity of the American experience.

The report rightly recognizes that religion has played a profound role in American history. But the history of religious liberty cannot be reduced to a single story of consensus or uniformity. From the colonial era through the present, Americans have debated the proper relationship between religion and government while working, often imperfectly, to protect both the free exercise of religion and the principle that government should not favor one set of religious beliefs or practices over another.

The history of religious liberty in America is the history of an ongoing effort to build institutions capable of protecting liberty of conscience across profound differences in belief. That history is complex, contested, and continually evolving. Any account of the American past that overlooks that complexity risks distorting both the historical record and the constitutional traditions it helped shape.

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From: "Chris Bateman" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL COMMENTARY - Chris Bateman
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 07:10:39 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Sir or Madam,
I greatly appreciate your intention of reconsidering the meaning of 'separation of church and state', which has become a greatly misused and misrepresented term in recent decades.

There is no doubt that Thomas Jefferson had an unusual relationship with religion, but it was not because he had no appreciation for it. On the contrary, it was precisely because he recognised the necessity of religious freedom that he was keen to keep the specifics of any one religious doctrine out of the constitution of the United States of America. Jefferson practiced a kind of demythologised Christianity and once suggested "I am of a sect by myself, as far as I know." This, perhaps, was part of his inspiration in laying the first stones in that great wall between Church and State.

Yet today, this principle seems entirely misunderstood, in part because of distortion in the meaning of the term 'religion', which certainly did not mean just 'organised religion' to Jefferson. He was, however, wildly offended by the attempt to ally power and religious doctrine, and judged priests as inherently vulnerable to making alliances with tyrants. In this, his scepticism is shared today by a great many people who do not claim any religion, some of whom view Separation of Church and State as a political weapon to wield against people of faith rather than a protection against one set of adherents using government power to curtail liberty.

Any religion you do not personally practice will tend to be judged as inescapable foolishness. In this regard, it doesn't matter if you yourself confess a religion or not: the principle of the ludicrousness of other people's metaphysical beliefs holds either way. The trouble is, when so many people cannot recognise any part of themselves as related to the word 'religion', it becomes perfectly possible for a great many forms of outlandish silliness to infiltrate government bureaucracy under the wall. Secularity is no guarantee of good sense, and bunk dressed up as science can cause just as much harm as the most deluded religious fanatic.

Rather than Separation of Church and State, perhaps we should build upon the idea that the purpose of this principle is to prevent any systematic foolishness from seizing control of the state apparatus to enforce its nonsense upon others. Rather than Separation of Church and State, we might talk about (forgiving my impertinence) *Separation of Chump and State*. For truly, when it comes to the reasons for erecting such a functional barrier between certain aspects of human life and government, arguing about what 'religion' (or 'Church') means won't help us fulfil what is, in fact, an admirable purpose: ensuring that everyone has the freedom to determine their own metaphysical and ethical positions.

Today, in fact, most of the nations that ever claimed to be liberal democracies no longer face serious risks of freedom being undermined by religious factions attempting to seize control of state bureaucracy. On the contrary, we face far greater dangers from non-religious hokum, and 'science says jump off a cliff' is as vast a playground of idiocy as 'God says jump off a cliff'. What matters is whether jumping off a cliff is an appropriate idea for government to enact (hint: it isn't), not whichever framework of justification is evoked behind it. A chump is a chump whatever they happen to believe.

Now the genuine problem in having stopped thinking intelligently about religion as an essentially unavoidable conceptual framework emerges from the brickwork, because the entire efficacy of the metaphorical wall between Church and State only works when it's understood that everyone has something corresponding to that which is problematic in the figurative 'Church'. You can't just take this word literally. Nobody would be ridiculous

enough to presume that this ideal is about preventing ecclesiastical architecture from infiltrating legislative buildings, after all.

Separation of Chump and State requires us to take a step backwards, to the point when theology ceased to be a central discipline in the university, and reframe theology as metaphysics in order to include its secular equivalents (what is often called 'ideology'). Thus we might finally complete the process of secularisation that became derailed when non-religious faith created new generations of enthusiastic chumps who have thrived and multiplied ever since. Until we restore our understanding of what Jefferson's wall was intended to keep out of government, we will continue to be at risk from being governed by political chumps.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Bateman

Founder of International Hobo Ltd
Award-winning commercial game design, narrative and scripts

Latest book: *Game Writing: Narrative Skills for Videogames*, Second Edition
The original game narrative handbook returns, revised and expanded!

From: Carrie Owens <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment: Separation of Church and State - Carrie Mims
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 12:11:52 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Members of the Religious Liberty Commission:

It was disturbing to read and hear about the Commission wanting to replace the wall of separation between church and state with a "bridge." With respect, that is backwards. I am a Christian. This alarms me. The wall between church and state wasn't put there to keep religion out of public life. It was put there by believers who wanted to keep the church free from government control. Building a bridge across that wall won't make the church stronger—it simply gives politics and government money a way in. Before long, churches can end up chasing grants, accepting political favors, and answering to elected officials instead of to God. History gives us plenty of examples of what happens when church and state become too closely connected, and the outcome has rarely been good for either.

Keep the wall where it is. It's not a barrier against faith—it's a safeguard for the church's independence.

Sincerely,
Carrie Mims
Flintville, TN

From: Melissa B1228 <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – CHAPTER 14 – MELISSA BRUNZ
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 12:59:33 -0400
Importance: Normal

I support the Religious Liberty Commission's efforts to reaffirm one of our nation's most fundamental constitutional freedoms: the free exercise of religion. Religious liberty protects Americans of every faith, as well as those with no religious affiliation, by ensuring that government respects freedom of conscience while protecting the rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

I appreciate the Commission's willingness to revisit common misconceptions surrounding religious liberty in America. The phrase "separation of church and state" is not found anywhere in the Constitution. Rather, it originated in Thomas Jefferson's 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptist Association, where he reassured a religious minority that the federal government would not establish a national church or interfere with their free exercise of religion. In my view, that letter was intended to protect churches from government control—not to exclude people of faith or religious values from participating in public life.

Our nation's history cannot be fully understood apart from the influence of Christianity. Many of the Founders openly acknowledged the importance of religious faith and moral virtue to the success of our constitutional republic. Early Congresses opened with prayer, chaplains were appointed, and several state constitutions—including Pennsylvania's—contained explicit acknowledgments of God and Christian Scripture. These were not isolated events but reflected the religious culture that helped shape the nation's founding.

While the United States has never established an official national religion, many of the principles that informed our founding—including human dignity, equality, individual rights, personal responsibility, and the rule of law—were profoundly influenced by the Judeo-Christian moral tradition. Recognizing this historical influence does not establish Christianity as the nation's official religion; rather, it acknowledges the significant role it played in shaping our institutions, laws, and civic culture.

Although some cite Article 11 of the 1797 Treaty of Tripoli as evidence that America was not founded on Christian principles, I believe that statement is best understood in its diplomatic context. It reassured a Muslim nation that the United States was not engaged in a religious conflict, rather than denying the historical influence Christianity had on the nation's founding or the beliefs held by many of its founders.

Religious liberty is a right that should be extended to all Americans and to all peaceful faiths. Every individual should be free to worship according to the dictates of conscience without fear of government suppression, provided that the exercise of religion does not involve violence, coercion, or unlawful conduct or deprive others of their constitutional rights. Protecting religious liberty means safeguarding the freedom to live out one's faith while preserving public safety, equal justice under the law, and the constitutional rights of all.

I appreciate the Commission's emphasis on educating Americans about the First Amendment, defending the rights of individuals and faith-based organizations to participate fully in public life, and promoting a culture where religious liberty is respected for everyone. Protecting religious freedom

should remain a cornerstone of our constitutional republic, ensuring that government neither establishes religion nor suppresses its free exercise. It should also include preserving the freedom of people of faith to participate fully in public life without being told that their religious convictions have no legitimate place in the public square.

Thank you for undertaking this important work and for inviting public input. I encourage the Commission to continue advancing policies that safeguard religious liberty for all Americans while preserving the constitutional freedoms and historical principles that have long distinguished our nation.

A Proud Patriot,

Melissa Brunz

From: Nancy Litwack-Strong <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment. Religious Liberty Commission. Nancy Litwack-Strong
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 13:41:29 -0400
Importance: Normal

Please record my feedback, that I am totally against the findings of the religious liberty commission. We do not need a BRIDGE between church and state. We are not a country founded in or based on any single religion. The first amendment guarantees a separation of church and state. This has worked well since 1789, and there is no valid reason for muddying the waters.

“The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” Martin Luther King Jr

From: Christopher Hanson <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 17:04:38 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Chris Hanson. I am writing to express my opposition to the recently released draft report.

The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Every American remains free to pray, worship and speak about their faith. However, those individual rights do not authorize the government to sponsor religious observances or use its authority to promote one faith over others. The report ignores this critical distinction at every turn, dismissing the longstanding understanding of the Establishment Clause while failing to acknowledge the overwhelming historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government.

Many of the reports recommendations would further entangle the government with religion rather than protecting religious freedom. Among other proposals, it calls for abandoning longstanding First Amendment principles, expanding governmental promotion of religion in public schools and other public institutions, repealing the Johnson Amendment so that tax-exempt churches can engage in partisan electioneering, resurrecting the failed 2018 Religious Liberty Task Force and creating new hotlines dedicated to advancing preferred religious claims, and encouraging judicial appointments based on a particular ideological vision of religious liberty. Taken together, these proposals threaten the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers alike.

I ask that you withdraw this report to respect our First Amendment rights. Thank you.

From: Pedro Camacho <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Pedro Camacho
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 17:25:17 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Ret. US Army CPT Pedro J. Camacho, and I am writing to strongly oppose the recently published draft report.

The Establishment Clause protects religious freedom by preventing government favoritism towards any religion. Americans can pray, worship, and discuss faith, but the government cannot endorse or promote a specific religion. The report overlooks this key distinction and ignores the historical evidence that the Framers intended to keep religion and government separate.

Many of the reports recommendations risk deepening government entanglement with religion instead of protecting religious freedom. It suggests abandoning First Amendment principles, increasing government promotion of religion in public schools and institutions, repealing the Johnson Amendment to let tax-exempt churches engage in partisan politics, reviving the failed 2018 Religious Liberty Task Force, and creating hotlines for specific religious claims. It also advocates judicial appointments aligned with particular religious-liberty ideologies. These proposals threaten the constitutional principle of religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers.

This report infringes on Americans' freedom of conscience, regardless of belief. I ask you to withdraw it to respect First Amendment rights. Thank you.

From: Richard Alfieri <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Richard Alfieri
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 17:40:02 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Richard Alfieri. I am writing to express my firm opposition to the recently released draft report.

The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Every American remains free to pray, worship, and speak about her or his faith. Those individual rights do not, however, authorize the government to sponsor religious observances or use its authority to promote one faith over others. The report ignores this critical distinction at every turn, dismissing the longstanding understanding of the Establishment Clause while failing to acknowledge the overwhelming historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government.

Many of the reports recommendations would further entangle the government with religion rather than protecting religious freedom. Among other proposals, it calls for abandoning longstanding First Amendment principles, expanding governmental promotion of religion in public schools and other public institutions, repealing the Johnson Amendment so that tax-exempt churches can engage in partisan electioneering, resurrecting the failed 2018 Religious Liberty Task Force and creating new hotlines dedicated to advancing preferred religious claims, and encouraging judicial appointments based on a particular ideological vision of religious liberty. Taken together, these proposals threaten the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers alike.

This report undermines the freedom of conscience for all Americans, regardless of their belief or lack thereof. I ask that you withdraw this report to respect the First Amendment rights of all Americans.

Thanks for your attention.

From: Joseph Dougherty <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Dougherty
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 17:45:22 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Joseph Dougherty. I am writing to express my firm opposition to the recently released draft report.

The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Every American remains free to pray, worship and speak about their faith. Those individual rights do not authorize the government to sponsor religious observances or use its authority to promote one faith over others. The report ignores this critical distinction. It also fails to acknowledge the historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government.

I ask that you withdraw this report to respect our First Amendment rights.

From: Bill Kudlaty <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Bill Kudlaty
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 18:06:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Bill Kudlaty. I oppose the recently released draft report and am writing to tell you this.

The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty . It ensures that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Every American remains free to pray, worship and speak about their faith. However, those individual rights do not authorize the government to sponsor religious observances or use its authority to promote one faith over others. All through it, the report ignores this critical distinction . It dismisses the longstanding understanding of the Establishment Clause while failing to acknowledge the overwhelming historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government.

Many of the reports recommendations would further entangle the government with religion rather than protecting religious freedom. Among other proposals, it calls for abandoning longstanding First Amendment principles, expanding governmental promotion of religion in public schools and other public institutions, repealing the Johnson Amendment so that tax-exempt churches can engage in partisan electioneering, resurrecting the failed 2018 Religious Liberty Task Force and creating new hotlines dedicated to advancing preferred religious claims, and encouraging judicial appointments based on a particular ideological vision of religious liberty. Taken together, these proposals threaten the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers alike.

This report interferes with the freedom of conscience for all Americans, regardless of their belief or lack thereof. I ask that you withdraw this report to respect our First Amendment rights. Thank you.

From: Donald Ardell <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Donald B. Ardell
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 18:22:05 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Donald Ardell. I am writing to express my revulsion at and firm opposition to the draft report.

The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Every American remains free to pray, worship and speak about their faith. However, those individual rights do not authorize the government to sponsor religious observances or use its authority to promote one faith over others. The report ignores this critical distinction at every turn, dismissing the longstanding understanding of the Establishment Clause while failing to acknowledge the overwhelming historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government.

This report ignores personal freedoms supposedly assured for all Americans, regardless of their belief or lack thereof.

I ask that you withdraw this report to respect our First Amendment rights.

Thank you.

From: MARTIN STONE <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Protect the First Amendment!
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 18:31:00 -0400
Importance: Normal

I, Martin M Stone, hereby submit the following comments
regarding the outrageous and misleading draft report issued by the Religious Liberty Commission.

Unfortunately, the Commission's draft report does not present a balanced or historically accurate assessment of religious liberty in the United States. Instead, it advances a predetermined ideological agenda that repeatedly mischaracterizes the Establishment Clause, minimizes the rights of religious minorities and nonreligious Americans, and recommends sweeping changes that would erode one of the Constitution's most important protections for individual freedom.

At its core, the report rests on a false premise: that the constitutional separation between religion and government is somehow hostile to religion. The opposite is true. The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. This principle has safeguarded both believers and nonbelievers throughout our nation's history and has helped foster one of the most religiously diverse societies in the world.

The report repeatedly dismisses the longstanding understanding of the Establishment Clausebwhile failing to acknowledge the overwhelming historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government. James Madison warned that government involvement in religion corrupts both institutions. Thomas Jefferson described
the First Amendment as building a "wall of separation between church and state.
" The constitutional commitment to government neutrality toward religion is firmly rooted in our nation's founding principles.

The report also repeatedly conflates private religious exercise with government-sponsored religious activity. Individuals unquestionably possess robust rights to pray, worship, speak about their faith, and exercise their religion. Government officials likewise retain their individual religious rights outside of their official duties. Those rights, however, do not authorize government entities to sponsor religious observances, coerce participation in religious exercises, or use governmental authority to promote one faith over others. The report largely ignores this critical constitutional distinction.

Equally troubling is the Commission's treatment of Americans who do not subscribe to the Commission's preferred religious viewpoint. The report gives scant attention to the rights of atheists, agnostics, humanists, religious minorities, and those who simply wish to be free from government-sponsored religion.

Religious liberty belongs equally to every American, including
those who practice no religion at all. A government that favors Christianity necessarily diminishes the equal citizenship of everyone else.

Many of the report's recommendations would further entangle government with religion rather than protecting religious freedom. Among other proposals, it calls for abandoning longstanding First Amendment principles, expanding governmental promotion of religion in public institutions, weakening restrictions on partisan political activity by tax-exempt churches, creating new federal
mechanisms dedicated to advancing preferred religious claims, and encouraging judicial appointments based on a particular ideological vision of religious liberty. Taken together, these proposals threaten the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers alike**.**

The report relies heavily on testimony from witnesses representing one side of deeply contested constitutional questions while giving comparatively little attention to scholars, historians, civil rights advocates, religious minorities, or organizations dedicated to preserving governmental neutrality toward religion. As a result, the report cannot claim to be an objective examination of religious liberty but only an advocacy document supporting a specific political and theological
movement.

True religious liberty does not require government support and promotion of religion. It requires government restraint. Americans remain free to pray or not pray, attend religious services or abstain, preach, evangelize, criticize religion, change beliefs, or reject religion altogether precisely because the Constitution prohibits government from taking sides in matters of faith.

For more than 200 years, the First Amendment has safeguarded our nation's extraordinary religious diversity by ensuring that the government neither promotes religion nor interferes with its free exercise. That constitutional balance has enabled Americans of every faith—and none—to live together as equal citizens. The Commission should reaffirm that enduring principle, not undermine it.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Commission to substantially revise or withdraw those portions of the draft report that seek to redefine the Establishment Clause, diminish governmental neutrality toward religion, or recommend policies that would privilege particular religious beliefs through governmental action. Any final report should accurately reflect the constitutional text, the historical record, and the equal rights of all Americans, regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof.

Respectfully submitted,
Martin M Stone
Sent from my iPhone

From: Mary Bell Sison <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 18:39:45 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of

translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

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We remain, Yours truly,

Mary Bell Sison

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law,
1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Sent from my iPhone

From: Linda Taylor <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 19:00:04 -0400
Importance: Normal

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the

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Henry Taylor
Linda Taylor
PII

From: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment- Kevin Tierney
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 19:07:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Protect the 1st amendment by keeping religion and god out of government. Separation of church and state will let all beliefs be equal.

Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS

From: Raven de Waters <PII>
To: "PII" <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious Lberty
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 19:20:30 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Via EMAIL: PII

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

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We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]
Danene A Huntting

From: Mark Olson <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] mark Olson
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 19:26:45 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

Hello, my name is Mark Olson. I oppose the report released by the Religious Liberty Commission. The recommendations would erode Americans' First Amendment rights, by having the government promote religion. The Founders warned against government entanglement in religion. We Americans want a government and judiciary that is free from religion. Please do not act on the report's policy choices.
Thank you.

From: Janet Jagitsch <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious Liberty Committee Recommendstions
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 20:39:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Via EMAIL: [redacted]

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James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors,

and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, “In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments.”

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

I remain, Yours truly,

Janet Louise Jagitsch

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765

My treasures do not clink together but gleam in the sun and neigh in the night.

From: Cathi Sweeney <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Cathi Sweeney
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 20:55:53 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

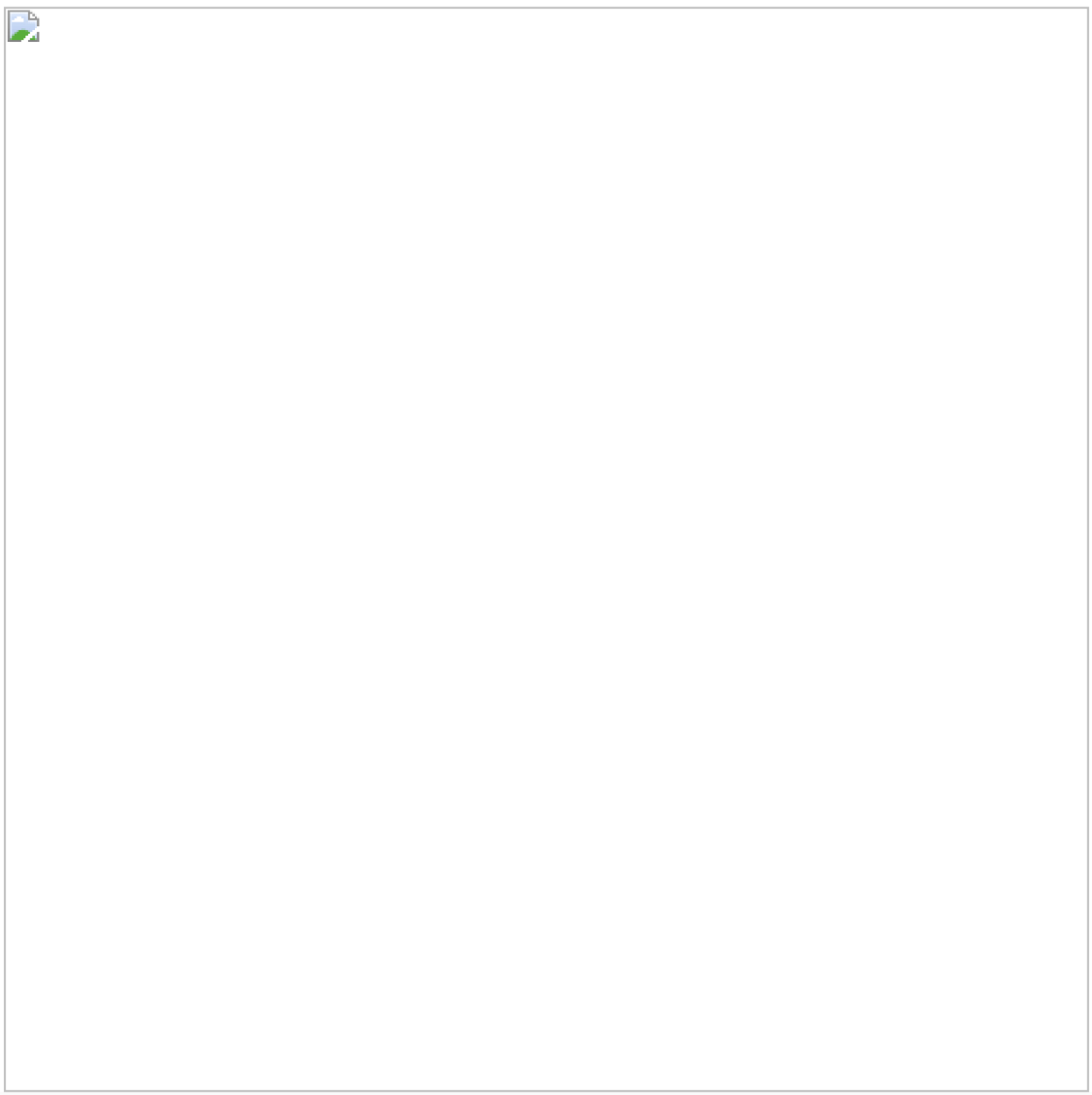
My name is Cathi Sweeney. I am writing to express my opposition to the recently released draft report. It is an outrage and an affront to everything that makes America stand out in the world as a beacon of sanity and hope.

The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Our individual rights to believe however or whatever we believe do not authorize the government to sponsor particular religious observances or use its authority to promote one brand of faith over others. The report fails to make this critical distinction and fails to acknowledge the overwhelming historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government.

Many of the reports recommendations fail to protect religious freedom: abandoning longstanding First Amendment principles, expanding governmental promotion of religion in public schools and institutions, allowing tax-exempt churches to engage in partisan electioneering, creating new hotlines dedicated to advancing preferred religious claims, and encouraging judicial appointments based on a particular ideological vision of religious liberty. Taken together, these proposals threaten the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers of all stripes.

This report crushes the freedom of conscience for all Americans, regardless of their brand of belief or lack thereof. I ask you to withdraw this report and respect our First Amendment rights. Thank you.

From: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Church & State, NOT to be combined in US government rules and regulations
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 21:21:26 -0400
Importance: Normal



I, Betty McAllister, wholeheartedly support and stand behind the following article, hoping and praying that you will see the massive conflict that has come down through the ages when these TWO entities became ONE. God forbid that this will take place in our land of the free and the brave, which has been so peaceful for the last 250 years.

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the

freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

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power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that “The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State.” [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

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We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from

making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2



From: Brad Snedecor <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Brad Snedecor
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 21:35:25 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission:

The commission's recently released draft report seems to be a biased document aimed at undermining my protection under the Establishment Clause.

Here are some example situations where the report's recommendations conflict with my rights:

--As a non-religious person, my rights are violated every time my tax dollars are used to fund religious indoctrination in schools.

--Obviously, when medical or other services needed in a particular locale are delegated to religious institutions, the rights of non-religious clients, and clients with different religious convictions, are violated if that institution withholds services for religious reasons, or proselytizes.

--The report attacks the Johnson amendment. The Johnson amendment does not prevent church members from making political speech. Neither does it prevent church officials from political activity or making political speech what it does do is prohibit government subsidy in the form of tax exemptions from going to support that activity in violation of my rights as a taxpayer.

I respectfully urge the Commission to substantially revise or withdraw those portions of the draft report that seek to redefine the Establishment Clause, diminish governmental neutrality toward religion, or recommend policies that would privilege particular religious beliefs through governmental action.

From: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Chapter 14 (the Path Forward) - Kathy Jackson
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 21:54:15 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for producing the draft report entitled “Religious Liberty Commission” regarding “Americans’ First Freedom”. I am in total agreement with this document.

I strongly believe this document is way overdue. Our Founding Fathers recognized that religious liberty is not merely a private benefit for believers, but a public good for the nation. By protecting my individual ability to fulfill my duty to my Creator, the Founders established conditions that allow me as a believer and religious institutions to enrich every aspect of my civic life, including education, healthcare, charitable service, civic engagement essential to self-government.

Because religion is so central to human identity, and family and communal life, the church and state must have a rightly ordered relationship for individuals and societies to flourish. Human history has shown how difficult it is to get this relationship right and how dangerous it is to get it wrong.

Again, thank you for producing this document!!

Kathy Jackson

From: Ruth Maddy <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 21:59:53 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and it's obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

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We remain, Yours truly,

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
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[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Stefanie Moritz <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT--STEFANIE S. MORITZ
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 22:10:40 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Ms. Stefanie Moritz and I am writing in opposition to your recently released draft report.

The government already has an Establishment Clause that protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Every American remains free to pray, worship and speak about their faith as long as they don't do it on government property. This report is a misguided and wrong attempt to promote a state religion and it would result in favorable treatment to certain religions over others, and over those that choose to practice no religion at all. That is certainly not what our Founding Fathers intended. They intended a wall of separation between state and church, and that principle has served our country well since its founding. I'm very happy with that wall of separation since it protects my rights as an individual; I don't need or want this "religious liberty" document.

I urge you to withdraw this report to protect the First Amendment rights of ALL Americans. Thank you.

From: Dera Burt <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 22:11:46 -0400
Importance: Normal

Greetings.

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

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The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

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We remain, Yours truly,

Dera Burt

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft

[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
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[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Diane Delbridge <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Diane Delbridge
Date: Tue, 07 Jul 2026 23:53:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Dr. Diane Delbridge. I am writing to express my whole-hearted opposition to the recently released draft report.

The entire point of the government our founders framed with the constitution was to give equal consideration to the freedom of conscience of every American. They did not talk of God or the bible as fundamental to our laws. The commission is making this up and twisting reality to pretend we are a Christian nation when we have never been. The report is full of lies and misrepresentations of our history. The constitution put We The People in charge, not any religious figure or any king.

The report's recommendations are clearly intended to infuse one particular version of Christianity into the laws of the United States, to the detriment of the many valued members of our society who have different religious beliefs or none at all. This is NOT the business of our government. It also recommends infusing religion into our public schools, where it would interfere with every parent's right to instruct their child in religion as they see fit. These recommendations completely trample on individual and collective personal freedoms and rights.

Respect the first amendment and throw this report in the garbage where it belongs. Thank you.

From: FRANCIS MONARI NYANGORI <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 00:42:18 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England.

It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that

killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state.

The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue.

We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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We remain, Yours truly,

FRANCIS MONARI NYANGORI

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[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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From: Jennifer Stark <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 05:55:41 -0400
Importance: Normal

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

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The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3] **This mindset will take this country in a direction that I promise you will NOT want to go. This separation is EXACTLY why God has blessed this country to date. Removing or eroding this separation will bring about the end-not only of this country but the world as we know it.**

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

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Sent from my iPhone

From: Caleb Smith-Plummer <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 06:02:35 -0400
Importance: Normal

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We

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The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: “Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should ‘make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.” [7]

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Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord’s words that we “render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God’s.” [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that “The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State.” [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

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We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Caleb Smith-Plummer

From: Dewayne Buratti <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Draft Report – Dewayne Buratti
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 06:42:29 -0400
Importance: Normal

I respectfully submits the following comments regarding the draft report issued by the Religious Liberty Commission.

Religious liberty is best protected when the government remains neutral toward religion, rather than privileging one faith over others.

Unfortunately, the Commission's draft report does not present a balanced or historically accurate assessment of religious liberty in the United States. Instead, it advances a predetermined ideological agenda that repeatedly mischaracterizes the Establishment Clause, minimizes the rights of religious minorities and nonreligious Americans, and recommends sweeping changes that would erode one of the Constitution's most important protections for individual freedom.

At its core, the report rests on a false premise: that the constitutional separation between religion and government is somehow hostile to religion. The opposite is true. The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. This principle has safeguarded both believers and nonbelievers throughout our nation's history and has helped foster one of the most religiously diverse societies in the world.

The report repeatedly dismisses the longstanding understanding of the Establishment Clause while failing to acknowledge the overwhelming historical evidence that the Framers intentionally supported a broad separation between religion and the government. James Madison warned that government involvement in religion corrupts both institutions. Thomas Jefferson described the First Amendment as building a "wall of separation between church and state." The constitutional commitment to government neutrality toward religion is firmly rooted in our nation's founding principles.

The report also repeatedly conflates private religious exercise with government-sponsored religious activity. Individuals unquestionably possess robust rights to pray, worship, speak about their faith, and exercise their religion. Government officials likewise retain their individual religious rights outside of their official duties. Those rights, however, do not authorize government entities to sponsor religious observances, coerce participation in religious exercises, or use governmental authority to promote one faith over others. The report largely ignores this critical constitutional distinction.

Equally troubling is the Commission's treatment of Americans who do not subscribe to the Commission's preferred religious viewpoint. The report gives scant attention to the rights of atheists, agnostics, humanists, religious minorities, and those who simply wish to be free from government-sponsored religion. Religious liberty belongs equally to every American, including those who practice no religion at all. A government that favors Christianity necessarily diminishes the equal citizenship of everyone else.

Many of the report's recommendations would further entangle government with religion rather than protecting religious freedom. Among other proposals, it calls for abandoning longstanding First Amendment principles, expanding governmental promotion of religion in public institutions, weakening restrictions on partisan political activity by tax-exempt churches, creating new federal mechanisms dedicated to advancing preferred religious claims, and encouraging judicial appointments based on a particular ideological vision of religious liberty. Taken together, these proposals threaten the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers alike.

The report relies heavily on testimony from witnesses representing one side of deeply contested constitutional questions while giving comparatively little attention to scholars, historians, civil

rights advocates, religious minorities, or organizations dedicated to preserving governmental neutrality toward religion. As a result, the report cannot claim to be an objective examination of religious liberty but only an advocacy document supporting a specific political and theological movement.

True religious liberty does not require government support and promotion of religion. It requires government restraint. Americans remain free to pray or not pray, attend religious services or abstain, preach, evangelize, criticize religion, change beliefs, or reject religion altogether precisely because the Constitution prohibits government from taking sides in matters of faith. For more than 200 years, the First Amendment has safeguarded our nation's extraordinary religious diversity by ensuring that the government neither promotes religion nor interferes with its free exercise. That constitutional balance has enabled Americans of every faith—and none—to live together as equal citizens. The Commission should reaffirm that enduring principle, not undermine it.

Accordingly, I urge the Commission to substantially revise or withdraw those portions of the draft report that seek to redefine the Establishment Clause, diminish governmental neutrality toward religion, or recommend policies that would privilege particular religious beliefs through governmental action. Any final report should accurately reflect the constitutional text, the historical record, and the equal rights of all Americans, regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof.

Respectfully submitted,

Dewayne Buratti - Gulf War veteran

From: Patti Portmess <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 07:43:52 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

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We remain, Yours truly,

Patti Portmess

From: Andrew Sharon <[redacted]>
To: [redacted]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 07:54:24 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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Kendra Sharon

[1] https://www.justice.gov/.../president-trumps-religious...
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/.../dan-patrick-church-state...
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social...;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/.../adam.../index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Luvie Miller <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 10:01:24 -0400
Importance: Normal

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church

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We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

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Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

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We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

Lindsay

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=3d86a81c-58cb1189-3d818cf9-000babff41af-3037148e5368c99c&q=1&e=3aaa2adb-b9f6-473f-8c91-1ec23d0843c1&u=https%3A%2F%2Freclaimthenet.org%2Fpope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=c2809942-a7cd20d7-c287bda7-000babff41af-fb1d14d1face4edc&q=1&e=3aaa2adb-b9f6-473f-8c91-1ec23d0843c1&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.masshist.org%2Fpublications%2Fadams-papers%2Findex.php%2Fview%2FPJA01dg2

From: Kae Borrero <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 10:54:35 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

I remain, Yours truly,

Linda Kae Borrero

Apison, TN

Sent from my iPhone

From: Wolf Jedamski <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 11:01:46 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear DOJ:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by

religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

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more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

Blessings,

Wolf Jedamski

From: Eugene Lukac <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Eugene Lukac
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 11:30:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Eugene Lukac. I am writing to express my firm support for religious liberty for all, without entangling the government with religion.

Our Constition's Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion. Every American remains free to pray, worship and speak about their faith. However, those individual rights do not authorize the government to sponsor religious observances or use its authority to promote one faith over others.

I urge you to please respect the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers alike.

Thank you.

From: Lynn Marquis <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Recommendations of Religious Liberty Commission
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 11:40:59 -0400
Importance: Normal

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

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Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

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We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=8bb376ae-eeff1ffc-8bb4524b-74fe4867716e-3450eecd06795d87&q=1&e=cc111998-8f1a-4099-8e38-9ab586442192&u=https%3A%2F%2Freclaimthenet.org%2Fpope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=cd306310-a87c0a42-cd3747f5-74fe4867716e-775802cee49ca211&q=1&e=cc111998-8f1a-4099-8e38-9ab586442192&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.masshist.org%2Fpublications%2Fadams-papers%2Findex.php%2Fview%2F

From: Tony Varga <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 11:50:53 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Via EMAIL: [redacted]

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's

five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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We remain, Yours truly,

[1] https://www.justice.gov/.../president-trumps-religious...
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/.../dan-patrick-church-state...
[4] https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=8461909b-e12df9c9-8466b47e-74fe4867716e-9507e8b921c6d82b&q=1&e=dc6fbe51-ee4b-4b14-8899-6146a8be3b27&u=https%3A%2F%2Freclaimthenet.org%2Fpope-francis-calls-on-social...;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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From: Brad Loosveldt <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious liberties
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 11:55:25 -0400
Importance: Normal

To Whom This May Concern,
I thank God for this commission and its report. I fully support its work in reiterating what our founding fathers knew to be a pillar of our Constitutional republic. They knew our country needed to be full of people who follow Jesus. May God continue to bless you in this work and bring our country back to its Christian roots.
Sincerely,
Sylvia Loosveldt
Sent from my iPhone

From: Kae Borrero <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:03:03 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English

language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

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I remain, Yours truly,

Toni Volberg

TN

Sent from my iPhone

From: Natalie Furman <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comments on the 12 points
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:48:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing

with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Natalie Furman

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-

22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Kimberly Carignan <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:53:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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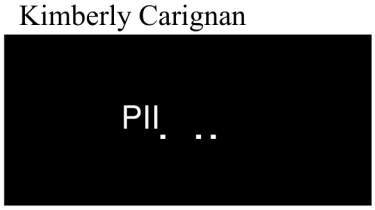
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Sincerely,

Kimberly Carignan



From: Jennifer Ivers <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:54:08 -0400
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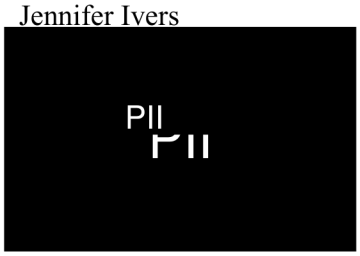
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Sincerely,

Jennifer Ivers



From: Frances A Rove <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
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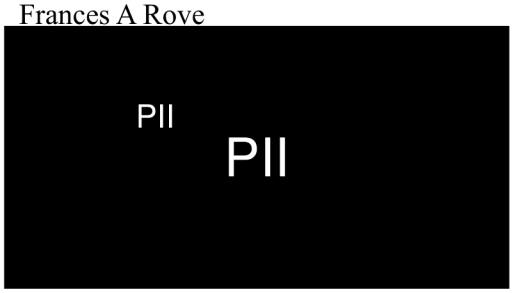
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Sincerely,

Frances A Rove



From: Matthew Tarpley <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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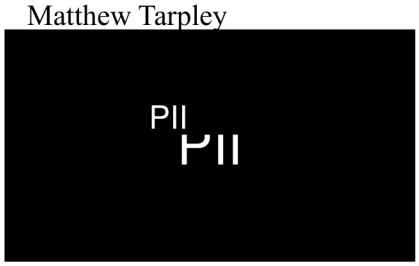
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Sincerely,

Matthew Tarpley



From: Catherine Stevens <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:54:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Catherine Stevens



From: Todd Wussow <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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Todd Wussow

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From: Lana Brewer <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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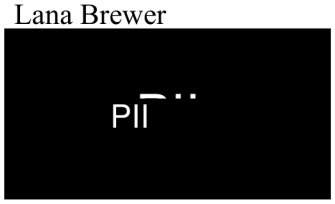
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Sincerely,

Lana Brewer



From: Anthony Apfelbeck <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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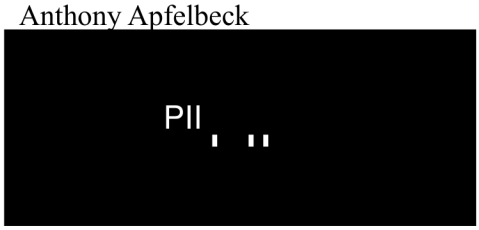
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Sincerely,

Anthony Apfelbeck



From: Larry Taylor <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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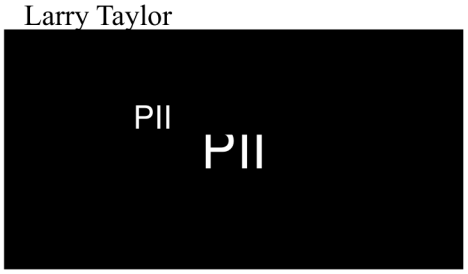
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Sincerely,

Larry Taylor



From: Glenn Lester <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Glenn Lester



From: Debby Webb <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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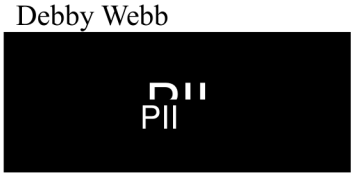
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Debby Webb



From: Kristin Cummings <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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Kristin Cummings



From: Roger Beck <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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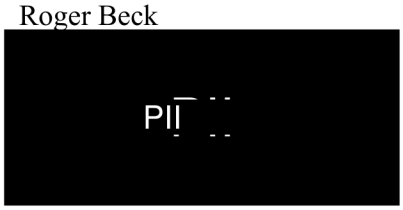
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Roger Beck



From: Marianne Fix <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:55:14 -0400
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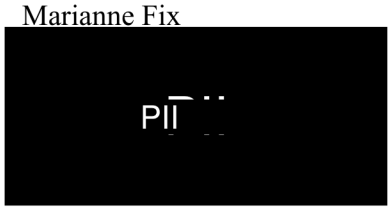
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Sincerely,

Marianne Fix



From: Leland Long <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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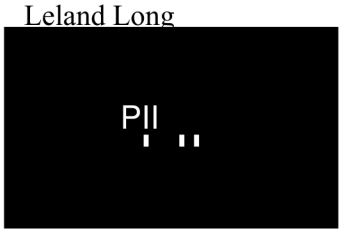
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Leland Long



From: "Roy Smith Jr, Jr" <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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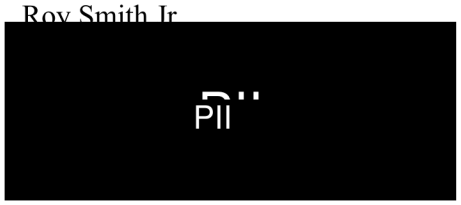
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Sincerely,

Roy Smith Jr



From: Jane Wiley <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:56:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Jane Wiley

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From: Brandon Frizzell <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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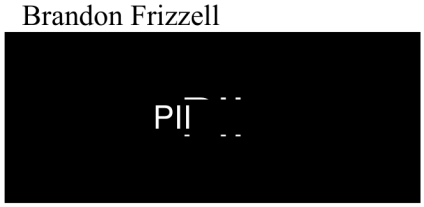
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Brandon Frizzell



From: Sue Krause <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
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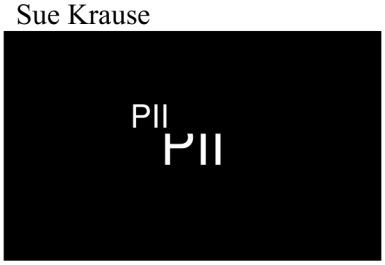
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Sincerely,

Sue Krause



From: giorgi lemis <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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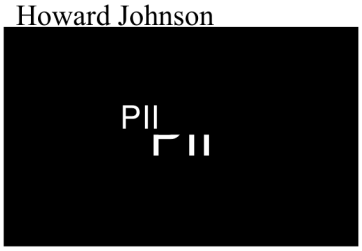
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From: Shelley Snyder <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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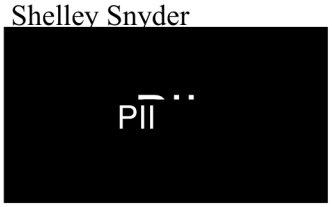
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Sincerely,

Shelley Snyder



From: "Robert Brosius, Jr" <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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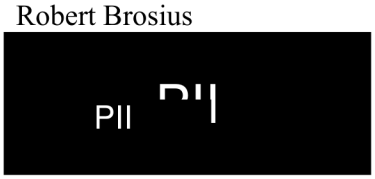
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Sincerely,

Robert Brosius



From: Peter Bromer <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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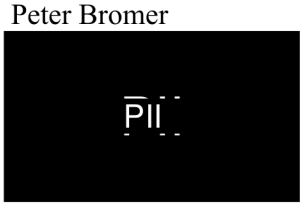
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Sincerely,

Peter Bromer



From: Crystal Bollinger <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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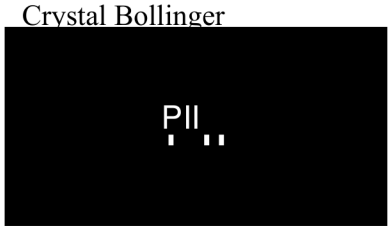
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Crystal Bollinger



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To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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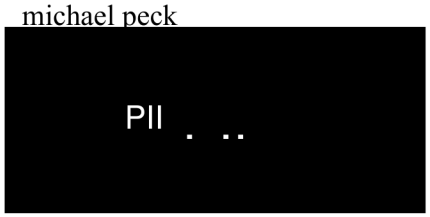
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michael peck



From: Mary Walsh <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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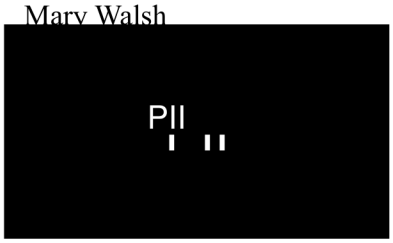
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Mary Walsh



From: Mike Smar <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
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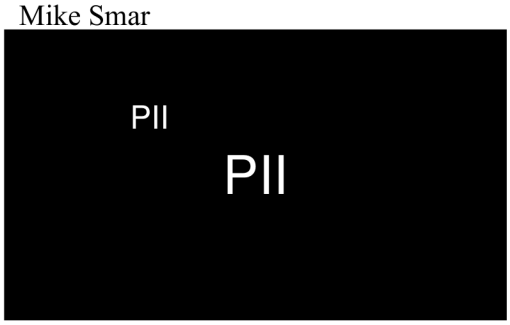
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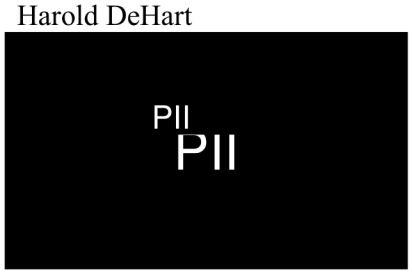
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To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
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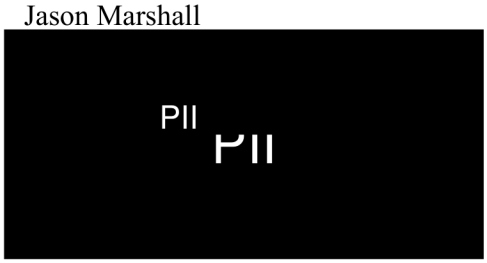
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Jason Marshall



From: Boris Svetlichny <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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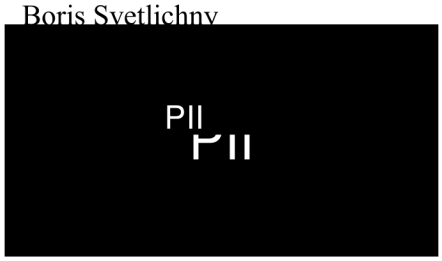
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Boris Svetlichny



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To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
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From: STEVEN GODBY <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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[redacted]

From: Judith Detert-Moriarty <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:58:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

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Sincerely,

Judith Detert-Moriarty



From: Maureen Ellis <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:58:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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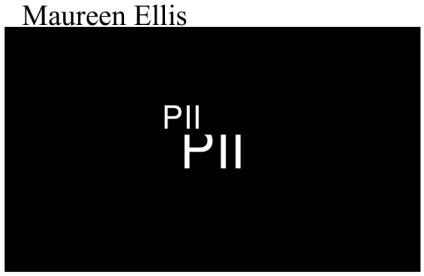
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Sincerely,

Maureen Ellis



From: Jerami Prendiville <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:58:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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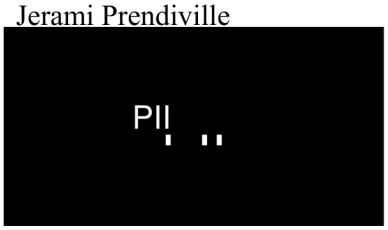
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Sincerely,

Jerami Prendiville



From: Kristina Wolf <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:59:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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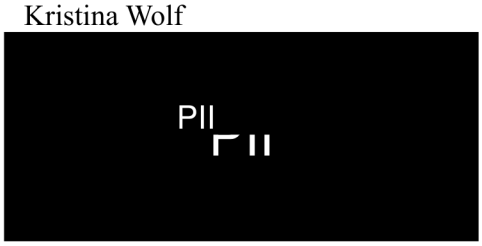
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Sincerely,

Kristina Wolf



From: Chris Washington <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:59:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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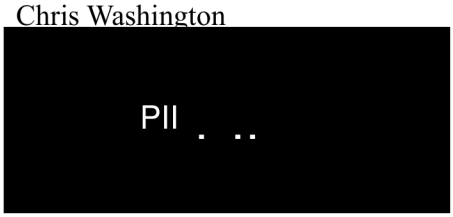
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Sincerely,

Chris Washington



From: "Lowell Palm, Jr." <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 12:59:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Lowell Palm



From: Carla Womack <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:00:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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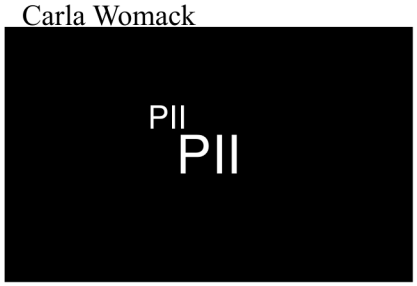
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Sincerely,

Carla Womack



From: Alfred Staab <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:00:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Alfred Staab
PII
PII

From: Charles Casper <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:00:13 -0400
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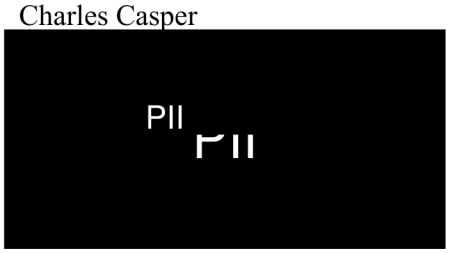
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Sincerely,

Charles Casper



From: Norma Rouser <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:00:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Norma Rouser

PII
PII

From: Howard Rouser <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:00:15 -0400
Importance: Normal

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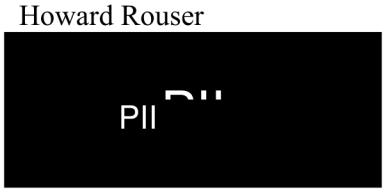
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Sincerely,

Howard Rouser



From: James Olcese <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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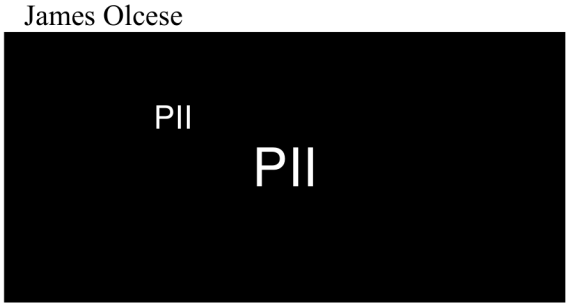
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Sincerely,

James Olcese



From: Rolf Swanson <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:00:17 -0400
Importance: Normal

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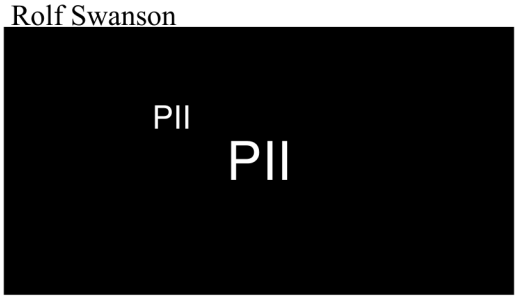
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Rolf Swanson



From: Eric Crouch <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:00:18 -0400
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Sincerely,

Eric Crouch

PII
PII

From: Doug Bender <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:01:09 -0400
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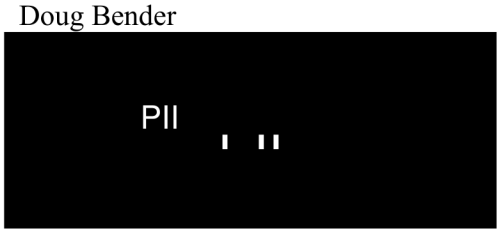
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Sincerely,

Doug Bender



From: Vincent Kotnik <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:01:11 -0400
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Sincerely,

Vincent Kotnik



From: Daniel Beaston <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:01:11 -0400
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Sincerely,

Daniel Beaston
PII
PII

From: Dalyn Ortega <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:01:13 -0400
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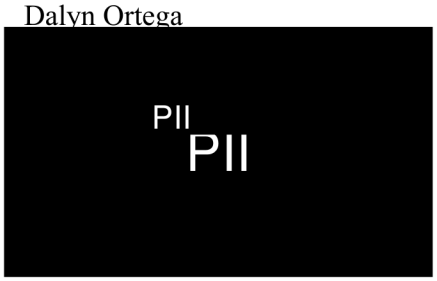
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Sincerely,

Dalyn Ortega



From: Donna Gold <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:02:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Donna Gold



From: Charles Redwine <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:02:12 -0400
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Charles Redwine



From: Chadwick Rastatter <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:02:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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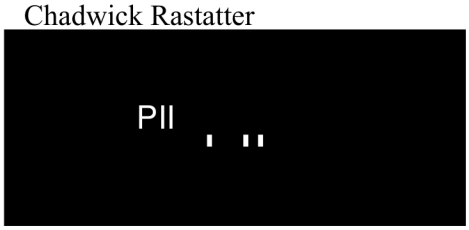
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If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,

Chadwick Rastatter



From: Ronda Snoe <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:02:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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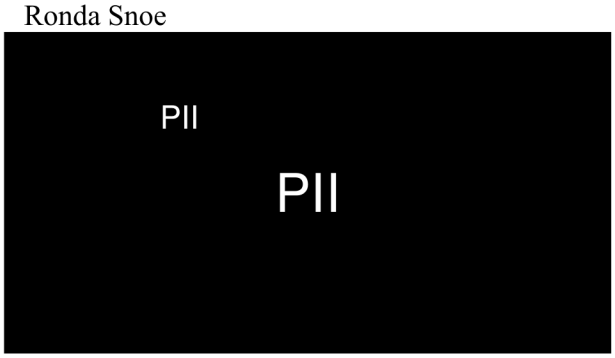
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Sincerely,

Ronda Snoe



From: Pat Pike-Dimel <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:02:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Pat Pike-Dimel
[redacted]

From: Neil Tigner <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:03:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Neil Tigner
PII
PII

From: Valerio Crovasce <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:03:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Valerio Crovasce
[redacted]

From: Susan Yarnell <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:03:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Susan Yarnell

[redacted]

From: M Bennet and Truus H Broner <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:03:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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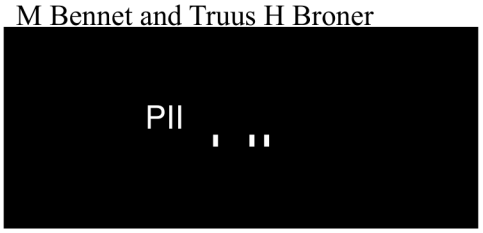
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Sincerely,

M Bennet and Truus H Broner



From: Robert Clark <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:03:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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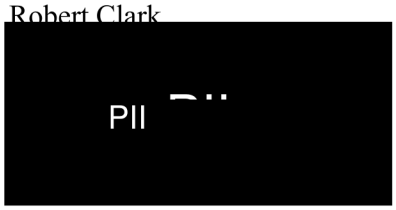
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Sincerely,

Robert Clark



From: Michael Abler <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:03:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Michael Abler

[redacted]

From: Alena Jorgensen <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:04:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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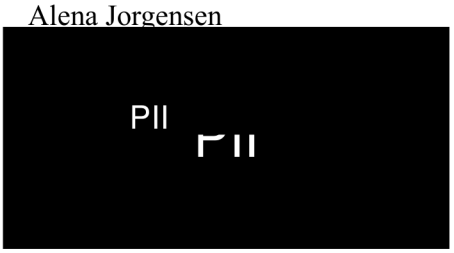
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Sincerely,

Alena Jorgensen



From: Louis J Arcese Jr <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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Sincerely,

Louis J Arcese Jr
PII
PII

From: Donald Cunningham <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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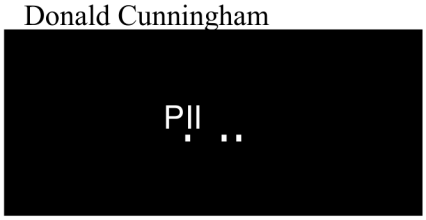
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Sincerely,

Donald Cunningham



From: Robert Hamilton-Pennell <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Robert Hamilton-Pennell
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:04:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Robert Hamilton-Pennell. I am writing to express my firm opposition to the recently released draft report.

I believe the report poses a serious threat to our constitution. The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government neither favors nor disfavors religion.

The proposals in this report threaten the constitutional commitment to religious pluralism and equal treatment for believers and nonbelievers alike.

I ask that you withdraw this report to respect our First Amendment rights. Thank you.

From: Tom Cluster <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:04:16 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Tom Cluster

[redacted]

From: Elizabeth Butler <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:04:17 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Elizabeth Butler
PII
PII

From: Catherine Tokarchuck <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:05:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

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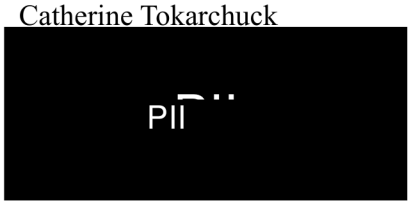
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Sincerely,

Catherine Tokarchuck



From: "Mario G. Rivera." <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:06:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Mario G. Rivera
PII

From: Patricia DeLuca <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:07:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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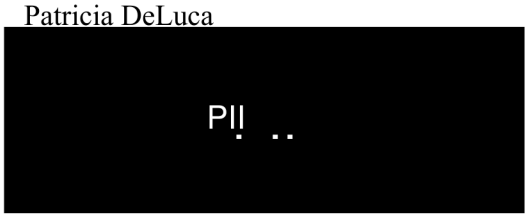
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Sincerely,

Patricia DeLuca



From: Dudley and Candace Campbell <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:07:10 -0400
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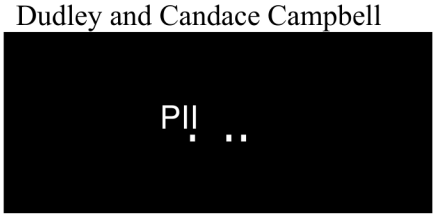
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Sincerely,

Dudley and Candace Campbell



From: Michael Ryan <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:08:44 -0400
Importance: Normal

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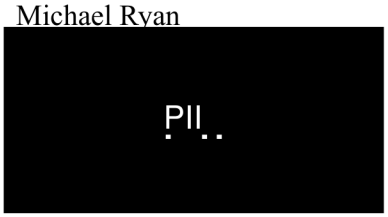
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Michael Ryan



From: Anne Cooper <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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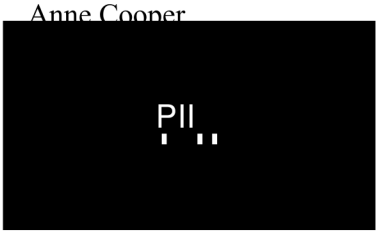
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Sincerely,

Anne Cooper



From: Urmila Padmanabhan <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:08:45 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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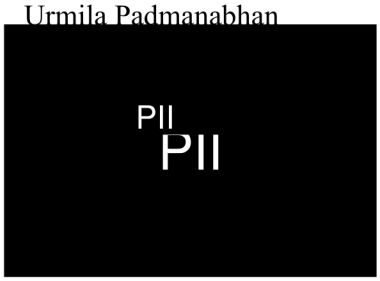
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Sincerely,

Urmila Padmanabhan



From: Ruth Jackson <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:08:50 -0400
Importance: Normal

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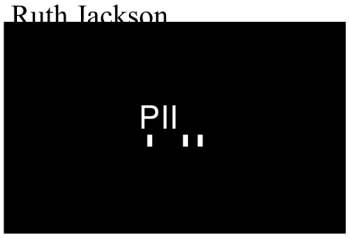
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Sincerely,

Ruth Jackson



From: Lucas Huezo <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:08:51 -0400
Importance: Normal

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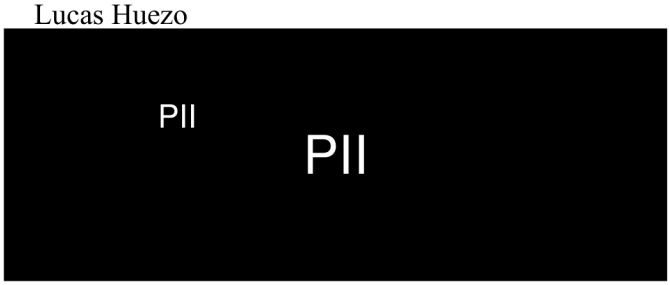
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Sincerely,

Lucas Huezo



From: Ralph Chappell <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:09:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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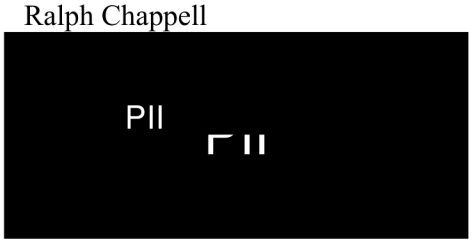
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Sincerely,

Ralph Chappell



From: Michael Yonkers <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:10:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

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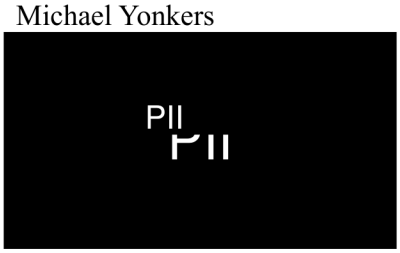
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Sincerely,

Michael Yonkers



From: Cathryn Boxberger <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:11:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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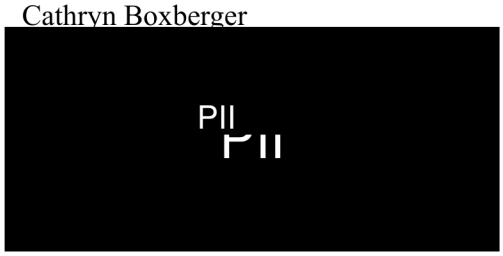
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Sincerely,

Cathryn Boxberger



From: Linda Gerstley <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:11:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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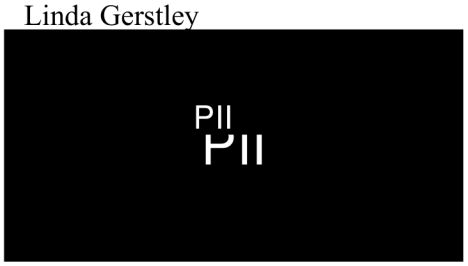
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Sincerely,

Linda Gerstley



From: Carell Jantzen <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:11:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Carell Jantzen

[redacted]

From: David Wolter <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:12:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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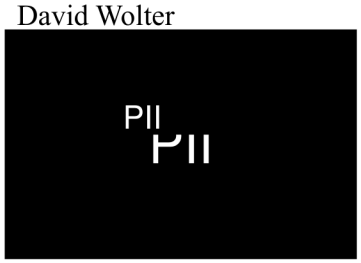
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David Wolter



From: David McAdams <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:12:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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David McAdams

PII
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From: Chris Sweeny <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:12:12 -0400
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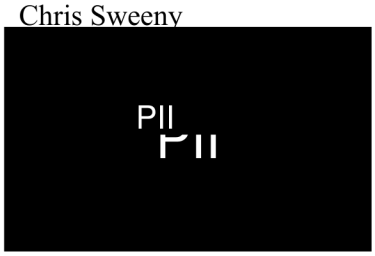
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Sincerely,

Chris Sweeny



From: RUTH Luce <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:13:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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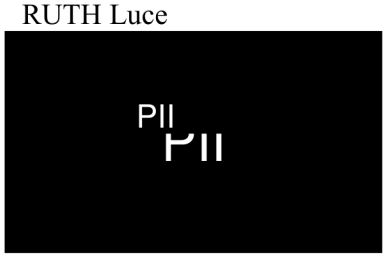
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Sincerely,

RUTH Luce



From: rich hermsen <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:13:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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[redacted]

From: Stephan Donovan <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:13:10 -0400
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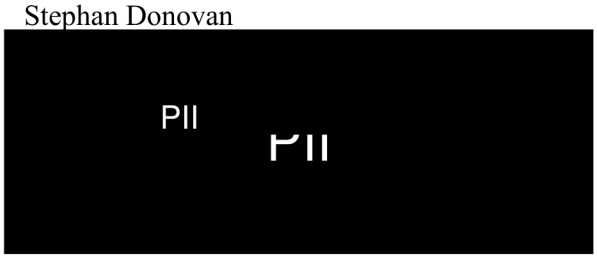
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Sincerely,

Stephan Donovan



From: Vanessa Jamison <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:13:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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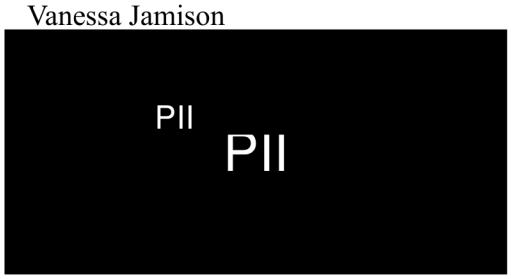
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Vanessa Jamison



From: Michela Colosimo <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:13:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Michela Colosimo
PII
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From: Michael Anderson <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:14:08 -0400
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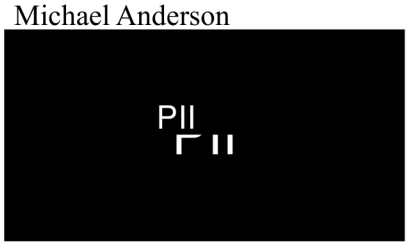
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Michael Anderson



From: David Cheever <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:14:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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David Cheever

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From: Matthew McDonald <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:14:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

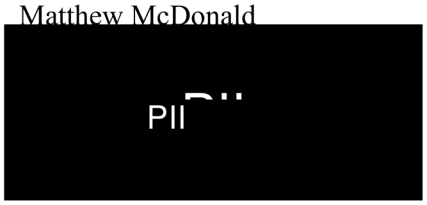
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Sincerely,

Matthew McDonald



From: Steven Solomon <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:17:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Steven Solomon

[redacted]

From: Casey Allen <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:17:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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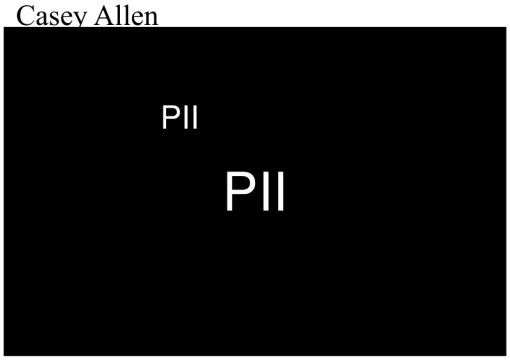
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Sincerely,

Casey Allen



From: Rebecca Crowder <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:17:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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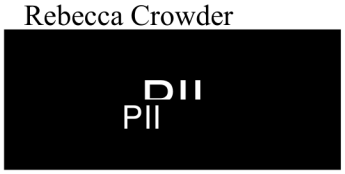
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Sincerely,

Rebecca Crowder



From: Gary Leventhal <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:17:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Gary Leventhal

[redacted]

From: Wesley Wolf <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:17:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

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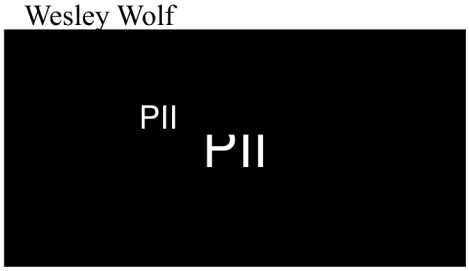
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Sincerely,

Wesley Wolf



From: Peter Gunther <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:26:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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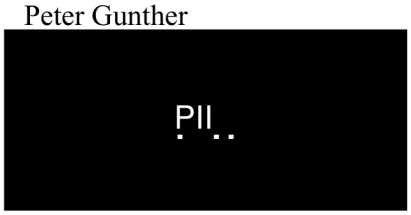
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Sincerely,

Peter Gunther



From: Jane Gibbons <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:26:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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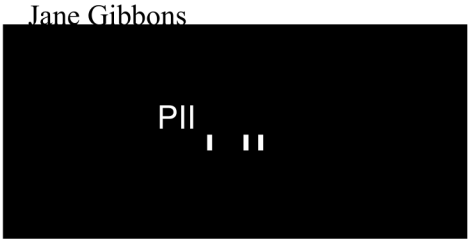
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Sincerely,

Jane Gibbons



From: Bridgett Heinly <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:27:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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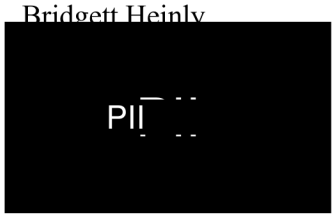
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Sincerely,

Bridgett Heinly



From: Teresia LaFleur <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:27:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Teresia LaFleur
PII
PII

From: Jamie Greer <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:28:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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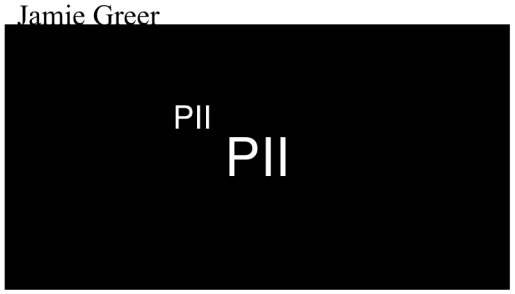
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Sincerely,

Jamie Greer



From: Aaron Goodman <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:29:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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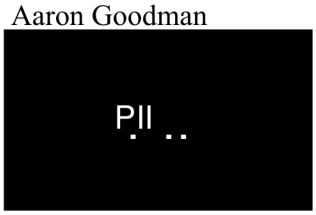
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Sincerely,

Aaron Goodman



From: Anthony Jammal <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:30:19 -0400
Importance: Normal

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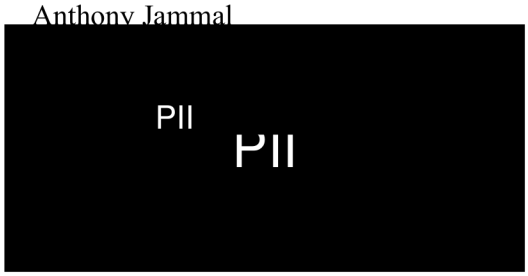
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Sincerely,

Anthony Jammal



From: Bernard Glos <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:32:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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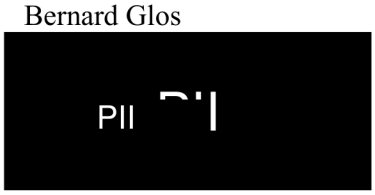
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Sincerely,

Bernard Glos



From: Joe Sinn <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:32:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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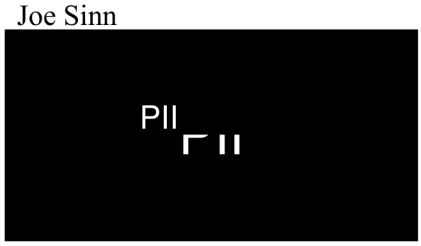
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Sincerely,

Joe Sinn



From: Judy Mack <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:32:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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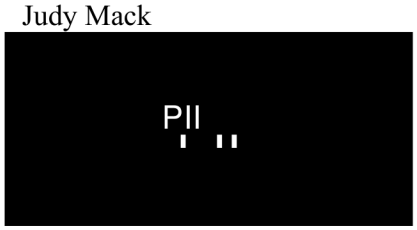
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Sincerely,

Judy Mack



From: Norman Heckman <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:33:07 -0400
Importance: Normal

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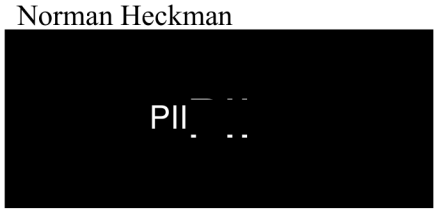
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Sincerely,

Norman Heckman



From: Timothy Newsom <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:33:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Timothy Newsom

[redacted]

From: John Hagge <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:34:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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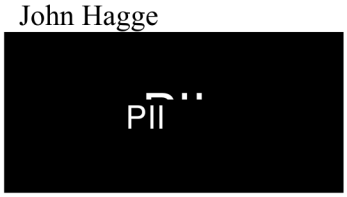
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Sincerely,

John Hagge



From: Bruce Lang <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:34:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Bruce Lang



From: Michelle Campbell <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:35:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Michelle Campbell

[redacted]

From: Neil Prater <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:36:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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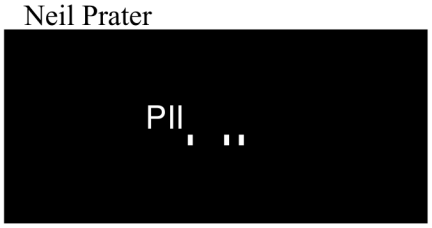
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Sincerely,

Neil Prater



From: JOAN REISMAN-BRILL <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:36:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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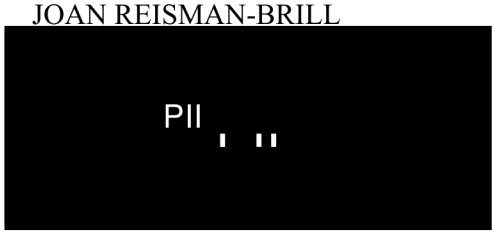
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Sincerely,

JOAN REISMAN-BRILL



From: Linda Pawloski <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:37:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Linda Pawloski

[redacted]

From: Grant Bushman <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:37:11 -0400
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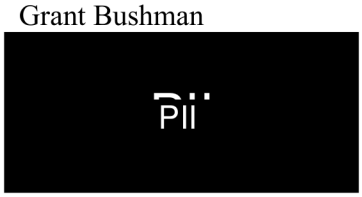
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Sincerely,

Grant Bushman



From: gp snodgrass <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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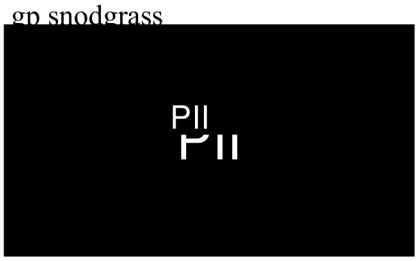
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Sincerely,

gp snodgrass



From: Kristen Muench <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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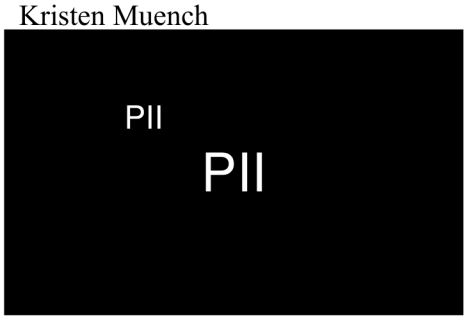
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Sincerely,

Kristen Muench



From: Mary O'Neill <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:38:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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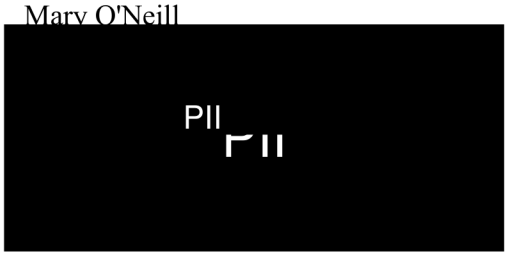
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Sincerely,

Mary O'Neill



From: Robert Fischoff <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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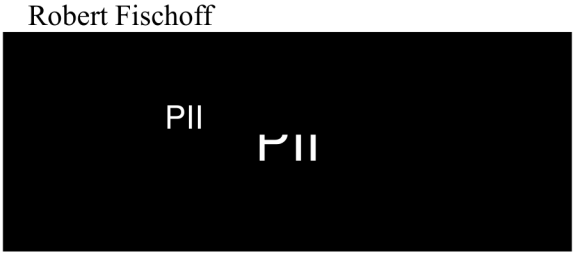
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Sincerely,

Robert Fischoff



From: Anthony Rosner <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:38:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Anthony Rosner

PII
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From: "Russell Elleven, Ed.D." <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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Russell Elleven

[redacted]

From: Janet Marugg <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:38:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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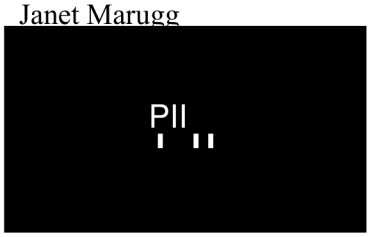
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Sincerely,

Janet Marugg



From: Michael Haralson <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:39:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Michael Haralson



From: Diane Osgood <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:39:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Diane Osgood



From: Mike Lesley <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:40:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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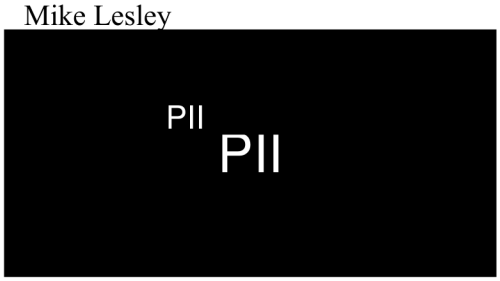
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Sincerely,

Mike Lesley



From: Phyllis Morris <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
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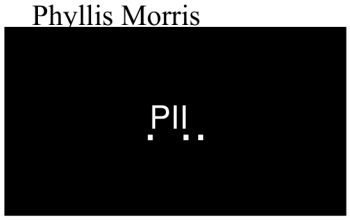
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Sincerely,

Phyllis Morris



From: Alison Keeny <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:42:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Alison Keeny

[redacted]

From: C J Gunsell <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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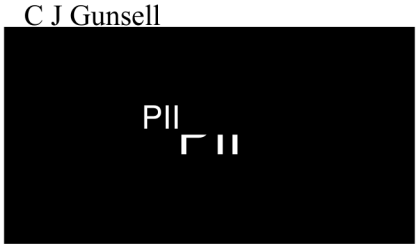
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Sincerely,

C J Gunsell



From: Donald Custis <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:42:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

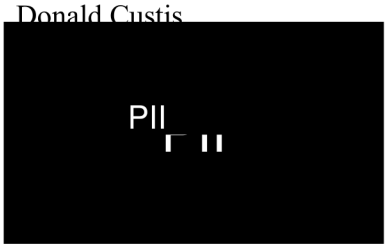
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Sincerely,

Donald Custis



From: Martin Bortnick <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:42:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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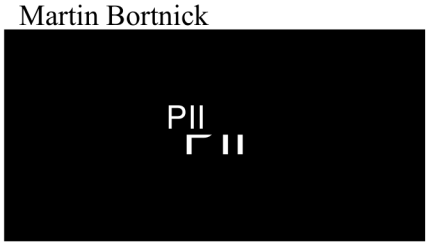
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Sincerely,

Martin Bortnick



From: Karen Wang <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:44:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Karen Wang

PII

PII

From: Steven Adams <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:44:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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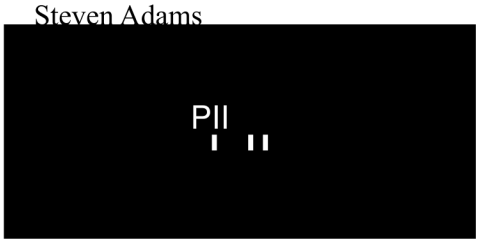
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Sincerely,

Steven Adams



From: Mark Alboher <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:44:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Mark Alboher

PII
PII

From: Mark Smith <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:45:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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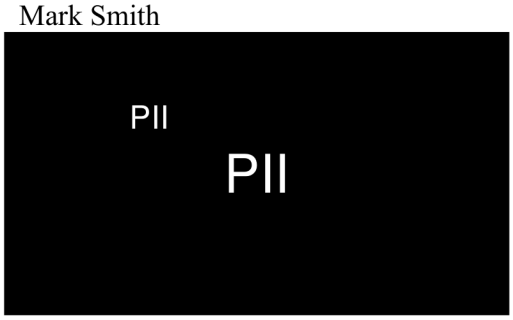
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Sincerely,

Mark Smith



From: Mary K Godfrey <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:47:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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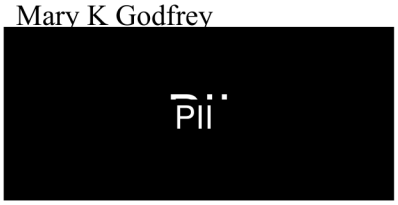
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Sincerely,

Mary K Godfrey



From: joy casey <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:48:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

joy casey

PII
PII

From: Susan Hagstrom <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:49:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Susan Hagstrom
[redacted]

From: ANITA LYNCH <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:49:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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ANITA LYNCH
PII
PII

From: Kelly Henderson <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:50:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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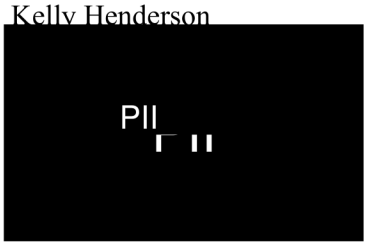
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Sincerely,

Kelly Henderson



From: Christopher Sirek <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:51:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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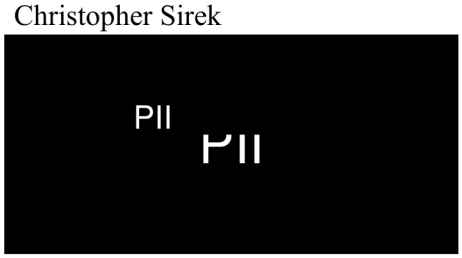
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Sincerely,

Christopher Sirek



From: Monica Schallenberger <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:52:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Monica Schallenberger
PII
PII

From: Ricardo Velez <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:52:12 -0400
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Sincerely,

Ricardo Velez



From: Allen Schwab <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:53:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Allen Schwab



From: Leland fausak <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:56:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Leland fausak



From: Kenneth Nahigian <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:56:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Kenneth Nahigian

[redacted]

From: Michelle McKenzie <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:57:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Michelle McKenzie
[redacted]

From: Nathan Zhang <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:57:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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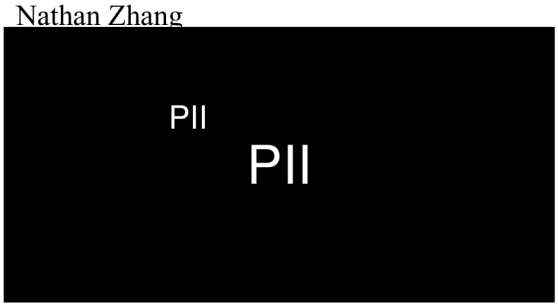
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Sincerely,

Nathan Zhang



From: Paul Kaplan <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:57:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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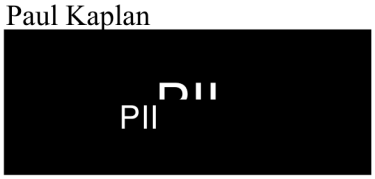
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Paul Kaplan



From: Sharon Fortunak <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:57:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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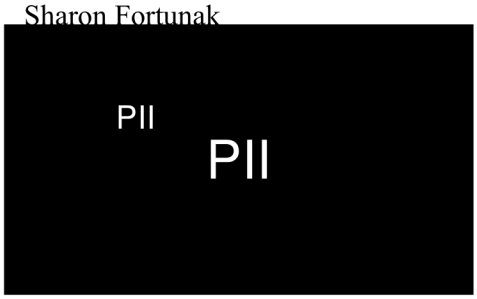
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Sincerely,

Sharon Fortunak



From: Jerry Cline <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:58:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Jerry Cline

PII
PII

From: Randall Hoppmann <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:58:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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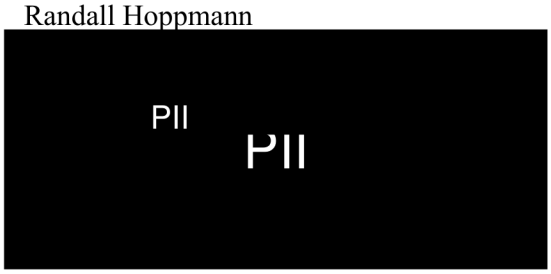
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Sincerely,

Randall Hoppmann



From: Ronee Shea-Tyler <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 13:59:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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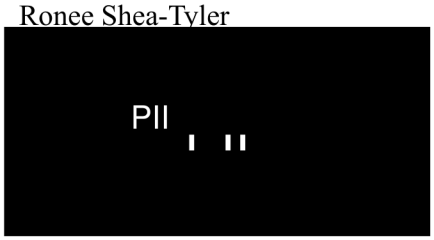
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Sincerely,

Ronee Shea-Tyler



From: Debra Patsel <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:00:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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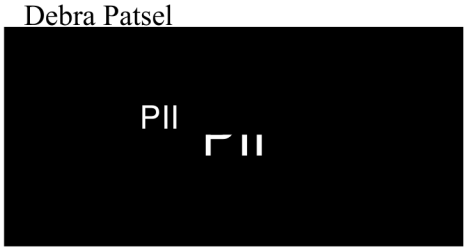
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Sincerely,

Debra Patsel



From: Jeanne Bornstein <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:01:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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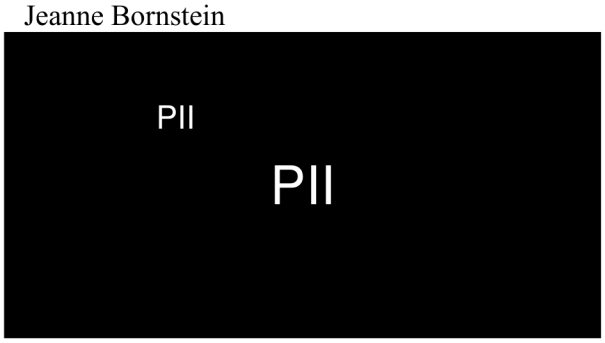
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Sincerely,

Jeanne Bornstein



From: Caryn Goldman <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:01:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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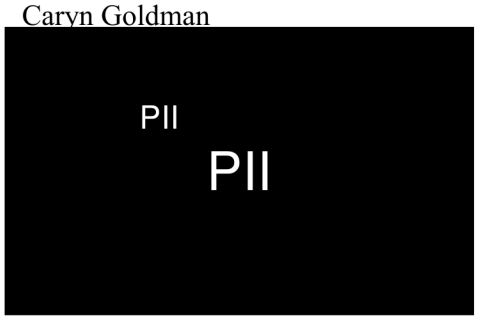
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Sincerely,

Caryn Goldman



From: Stephen Hatcher <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:02:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Stephen Hatcher



From: Katherine Ross <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:02:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Katherine Ross

[redacted]

From: Jim Geear <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:02:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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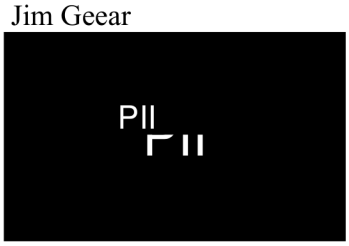
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Sincerely,

Jim Geear



From: Steffanie Pule <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:03:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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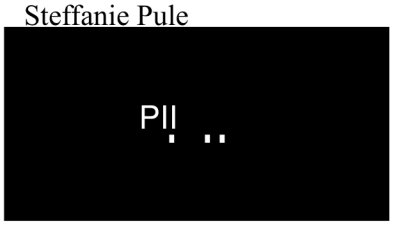
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Steffanie Pule



From: Steve Steel <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:03:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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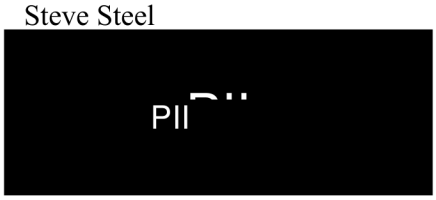
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Sincerely,

Steve Steel



From: Kimberly Jarvis <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:04:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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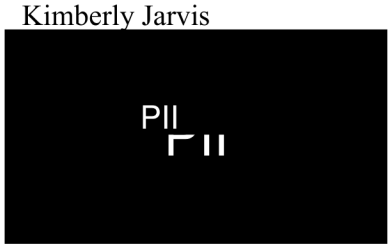
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Sincerely,

Kimberly Jarvis



From: mays swicord <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:05:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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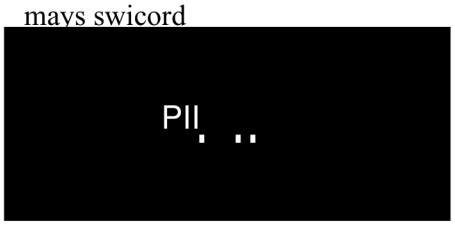
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Sincerely,

mays swicord



From: Chris Sanders <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:05:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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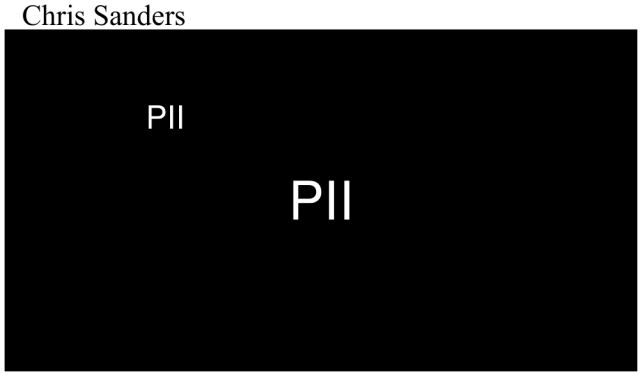
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Sincerely,

Chris Sanders



From: Yolanda Berumen <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:06:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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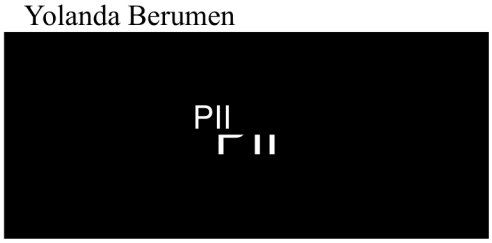
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Sincerely,

Yolanda Berumen



From: Diane Kirschner <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:06:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Diane Kirschner

PII

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From: Nancy Heck <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:06:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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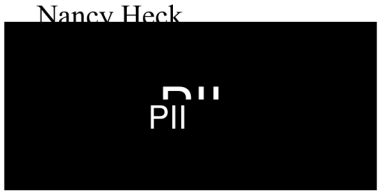
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Sincerely,

Nancy Heck



From: Joshua LaDeau <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:07:10 -0400
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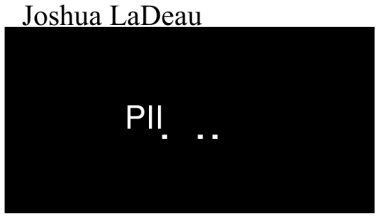
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Sincerely,

Joshua LaDeau



From: Donald A Randall <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:07:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

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Sincerely,

Donald A Randall
PII
PII

From: Scott Ritchie <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:08:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Scott Ritchie



From: Monica Harbison <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:09:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Monica Harbison



From: Roger Hannah <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:11:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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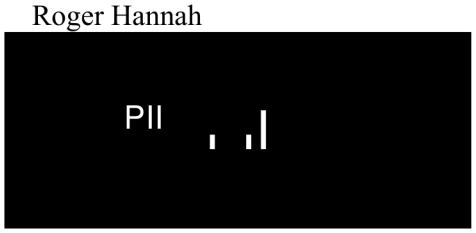
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Sincerely,

Roger Hannah



From: "Peter Rogatz, M.D." <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:11:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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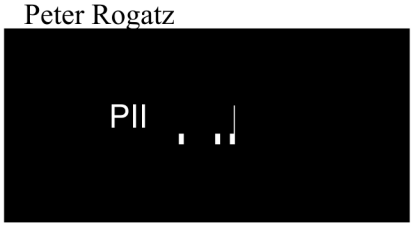
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Sincerely,

Peter Rogatz



From: John E Penery <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:13:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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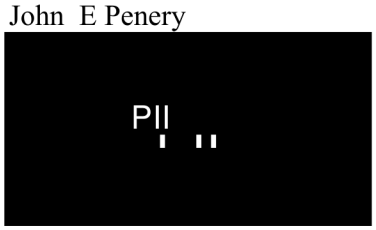
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Sincerely,

John E Penery



From: Marcia Dietsch <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:14:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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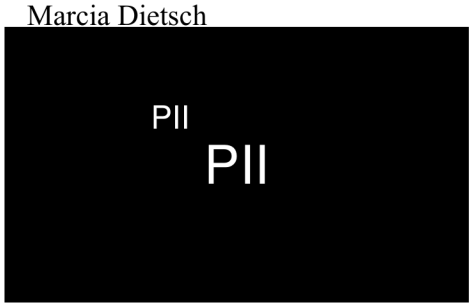
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Sincerely,

Marcia Dietsch



From: Ruth DuValle <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:14:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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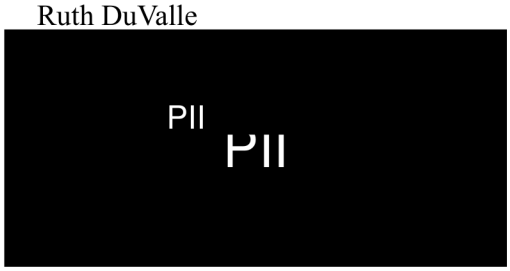
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Sincerely,

Ruth DuValle



From: Jason Crawford <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:15:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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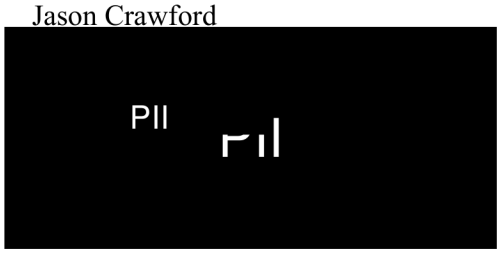
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Sincerely,

Jason Crawford



From: Tony Giardina <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:16:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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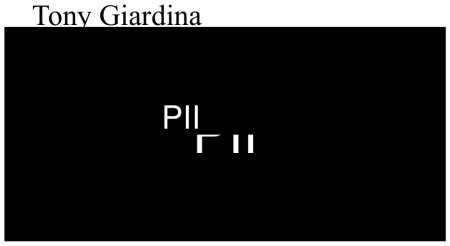
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Sincerely,

Tony Giardina



From: Constance Graham <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:18:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Constance Graham



From: Ryan Baka <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:18:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Ryan Baka

PII
PII

From: Laureen Coughlin <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:20:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Laureen Coughlin

PII
PII

From: Timothy Rauhouse <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:20:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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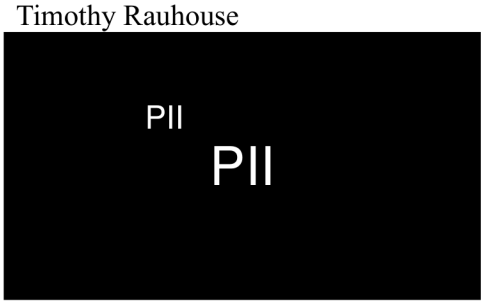
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Sincerely,

Timothy Rauhouse



From: Garton Garton <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:20:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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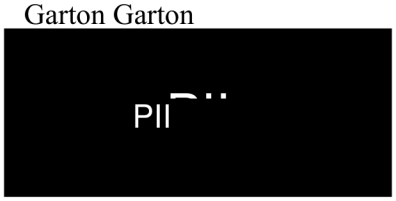
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Sincerely,

Garton Garton



From: Leanne Abbott <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:21:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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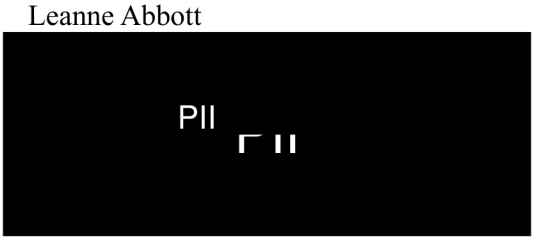
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Sincerely,

Leanne Abbott



From: Stephanie McKay <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:24:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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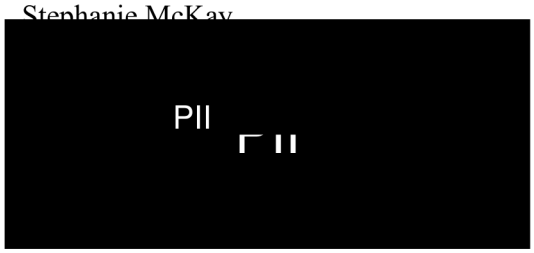
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Sincerely,

Stephanie McKay



From: Robert Janke <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:24:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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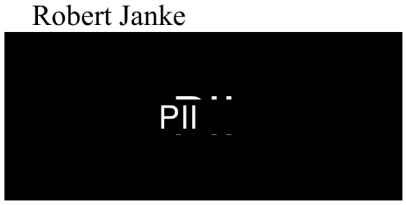
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Sincerely,

Robert Janke



From: "Gloria McKinnon, R.N." <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:25:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,

Gloria McKinnon



From: BARBARA BOONE <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:25:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

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Sincerely,

BARBARA BOONE
[redacted]

From: Brian McCaskill <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:26:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

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Sincerely,

Brian McCaskill



From: Christopher Seymour <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:26:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Christopher Seymour

[redacted]

From: Marie Weinstein <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:26:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Marie Weinstein

[redacted]

From: Paul Roszko <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:27:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Paul Roszko

[redacted]

From: Percy Hicks-severn <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:27:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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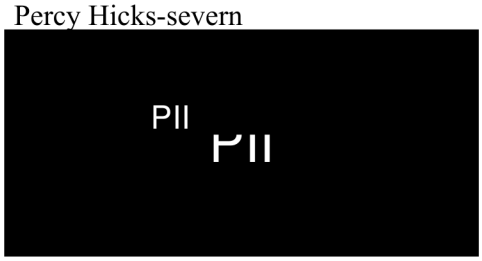
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Sincerely,

Percy Hicks-severn



From: Barbara Bornstein <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:27:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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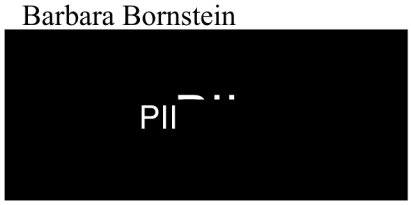
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Sincerely,

Barbara Bornstein



From: Joyce Black <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:28:07 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Joyce Black

PII
PII

From: Judd Kramarcik <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:30:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Judd Kramarcik

PII
PII

From: Keith Becher <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:32:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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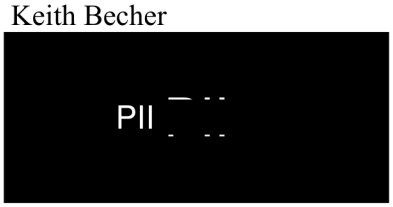
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Sincerely,

Keith Becher



From: "Pat Richter, MPA" <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:33:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Pat Richter
PII
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From: Lisa Berenson <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:33:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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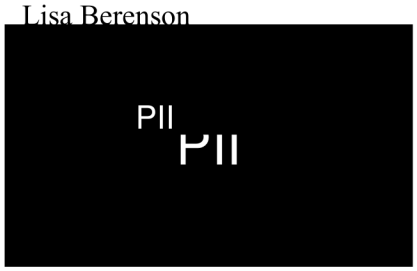
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Sincerely,

Lisa Berenson



From: Eric Weiss <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:33:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Eric Weiss



From: Jared Brenner <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:34:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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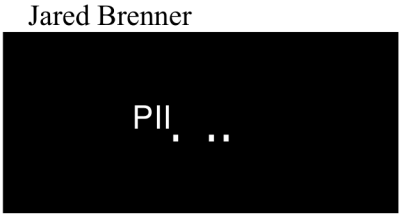
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Sincerely,

Jared Brenner



From: kae borrero <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:37:06 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English

language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was

feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

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The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews,

and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from

the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

I am in agreement with the above recommendations

I remain, Yours truly,

Sheri Trueblood

Delaware

Sent from my iPhone

From: Christine Melton <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:37:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,

Christine Melton



From: Joyce Simonds <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:40:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

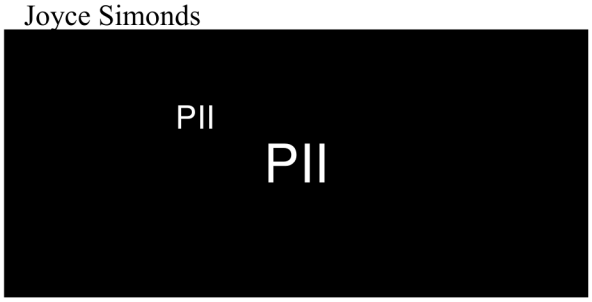
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Sincerely,

Joyce Simonds



From: "Joseph suarez, Jr." <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:42:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

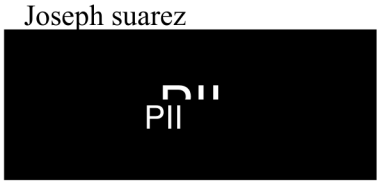
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Sincerely,

Joseph suarez



From: Randy Schnepf <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:42:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Randy Schnepf



From: Sonja Malmuth <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:43:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

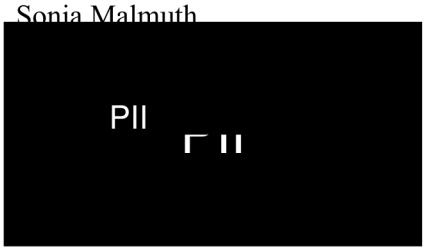
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Sincerely,

Sonja Malmuth



From: Donna Burke <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:44:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

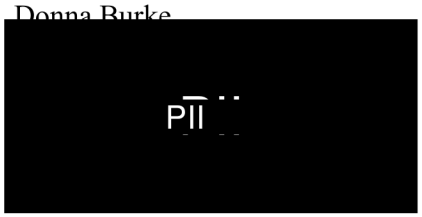
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Sincerely,

Donna Burke



From: Karen Hokom <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:44:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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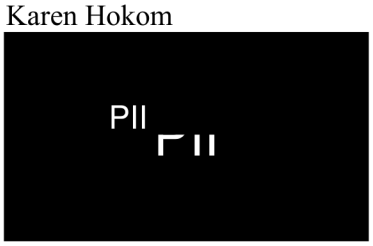
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Sincerely,

Karen Hokom



From: robert savoie <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:45:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

robert savoie

PII

PII

From: Marcia Naroditsky <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:45:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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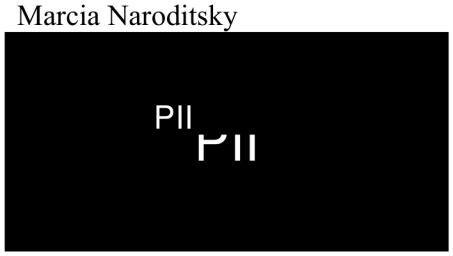
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Sincerely,

Marcia Naroditsky



From: Barb Koutsky <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:46:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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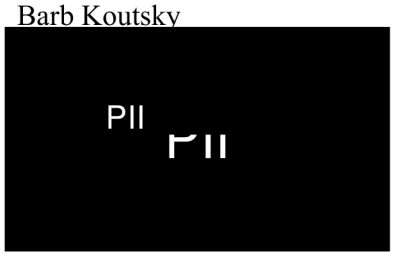
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Sincerely,

Barb Koutsky



From: Donald Porterfield <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:46:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Donald Porterfield

[redacted]

From: Steve Dean <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:47:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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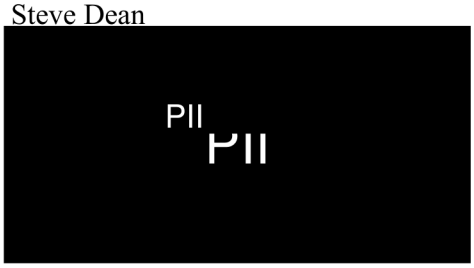
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Sincerely,

Steve Dean



From: Mushtaq Syed <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:47:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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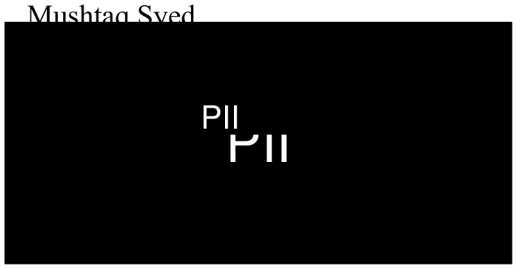
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Sincerely,

Mushtaq Syed



From: MJ Timmins <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:48:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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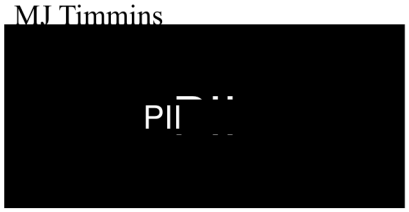
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Sincerely,

MJ Timmins



From: Tomas Miko <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:49:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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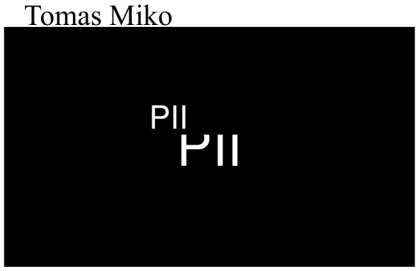
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Sincerely,

Tomas Miko



From: Matt Wessing <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:49:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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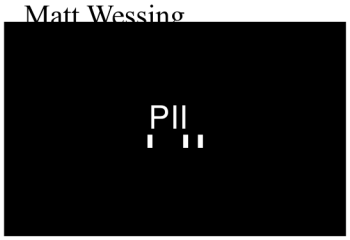
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Sincerely,

Matt Wessing



From: Laura Garro <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:54:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Laura Garro

PII
PII

From: John Metcalf <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:54:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

John Metcalf



From: Karen Phillips <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:57:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Sincerely,

Karen Phillips

[redacted]

From: Taine Ash <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:59:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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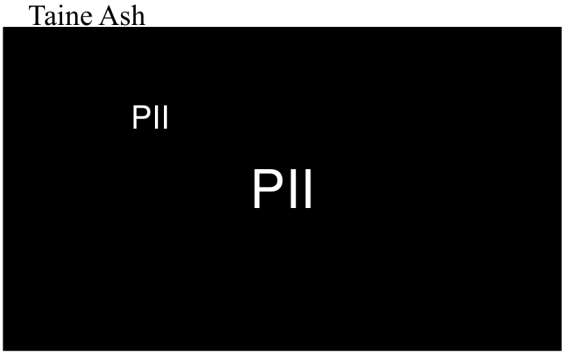
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Sincerely,

Taine Ash



From: Diana Madoshi <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 14:59:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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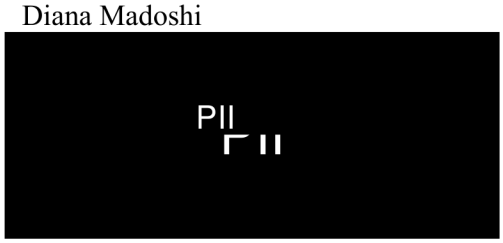
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Sincerely,

Diana Madoshi



From: Laurie Rowan <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:01:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Laurie Rowan

PII
PII

From: Chantelle Budzynski <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:01:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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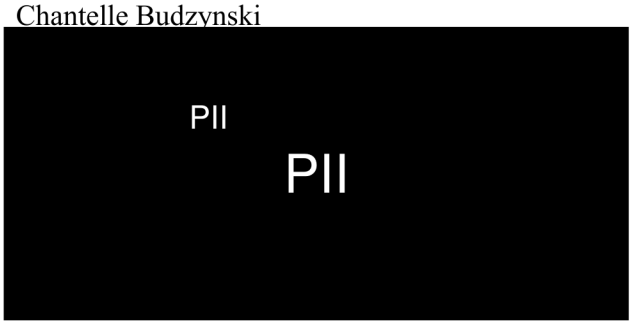
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Sincerely,

Chantelle Budzynski



From: Mark Wise <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:01:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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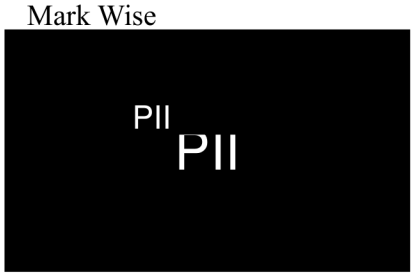
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Sincerely,

Mark Wise



From: Bonita Knapp <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:02:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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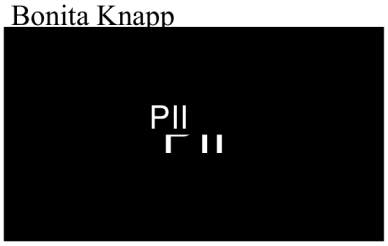
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Sincerely,

Bonita Knapp



From: Shaeril McBrown <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:02:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Shaeril McBrown
[redacted]

From: "Susan Nierenberg, CNM" <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:02:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

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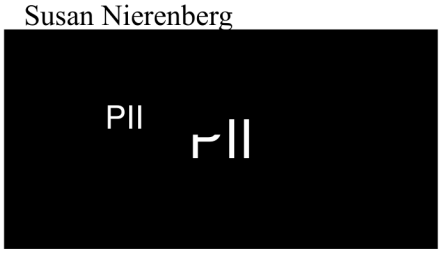
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Sincerely,

Susan Nierenberg



From: Rachel Morrison <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:05:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Rachel Morrison



From: Robert Cutshall <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:05:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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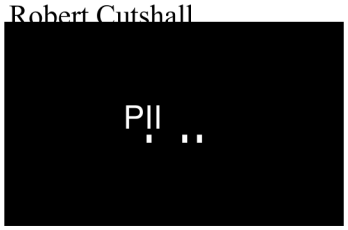
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Robert Cutshall



From: Lynn Murray <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:05:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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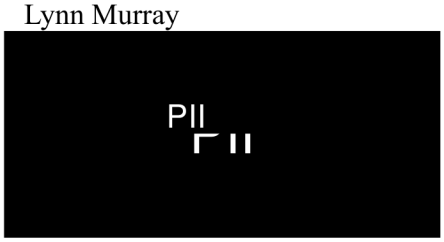
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Sincerely,

Lynn Murray



From: Samuel Smith Thrasher <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:05:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

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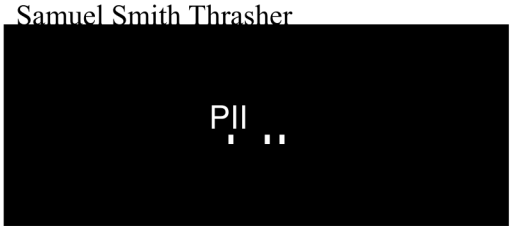
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Sincerely,

Samuel Smith Thrasher



From: Jenifer Henslee Peck <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:06:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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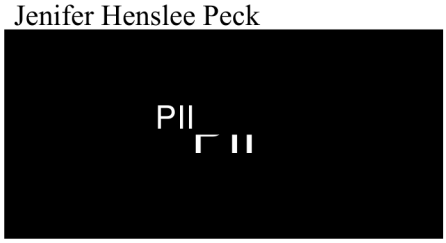
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Sincerely,

Jenifer Henslee Peck



From: Deborah Fallender <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:07:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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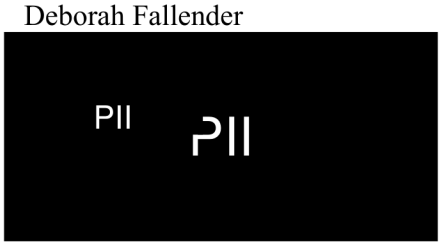
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Sincerely,

Deborah Fallender



From: Joan Makurat <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:08:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Joan Makurat



From: Sheila Green <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:10:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Sheila Green



From: Barbara Gelder <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:10:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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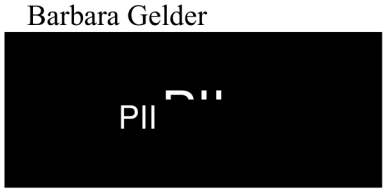
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Sincerely,

Barbara Gelder



From: Kathy Boyd <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:10:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

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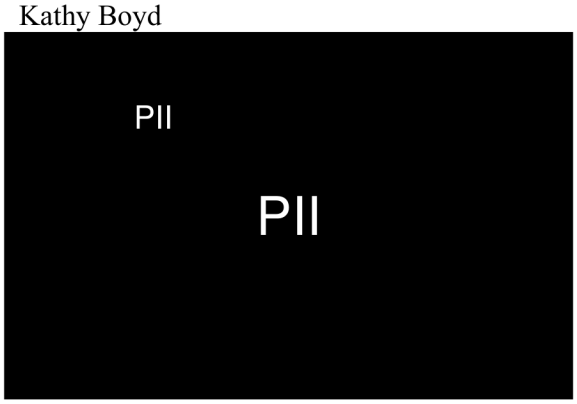
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Sincerely,

Kathy Boyd



From: Dakota Beeson <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:11:07 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Dakota Beeson



From: Renee Heller <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:11:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Renee Heller
PII
PII

From: Oliver Rich-Jackson <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:14:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Oliver Rich-Jackson
PII
PII

From: Mary Ellen Sychtyz <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:19:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

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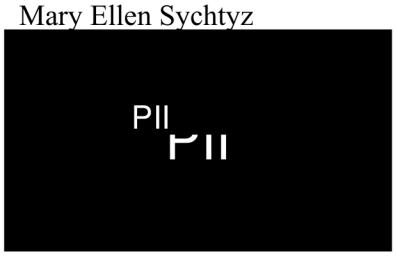
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Mary Ellen Sychtyz



From: Ryan Lester <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:19:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

Ryan Lester

PII
PII

From: Ginna Ramos <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:20:09 -0400
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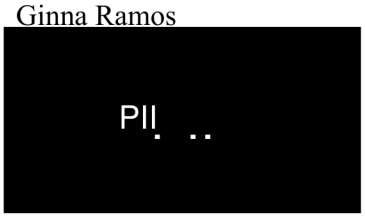
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Ginna Ramos



From: Bert Katzung <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:20:09 -0400
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Bert Katzung



From: Brent <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious Liberty
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:20:33 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The

same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and

taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Sincerely,

Brent Grider, a concerned citizen and believer.

From: Jeff Thiemann <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:22:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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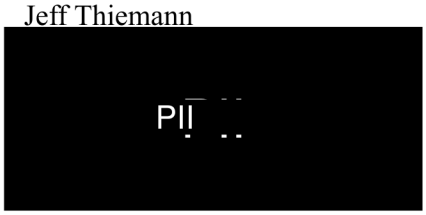
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Jeff Thiemann



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To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
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Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:22:10 -0400
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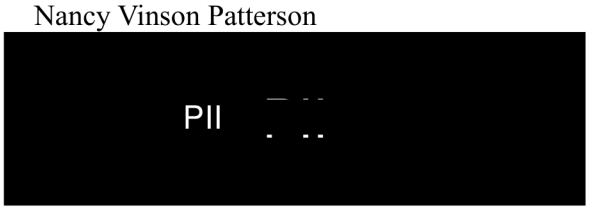
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Nancy Vinson Patterson



From: Chris Allison <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:22:10 -0400
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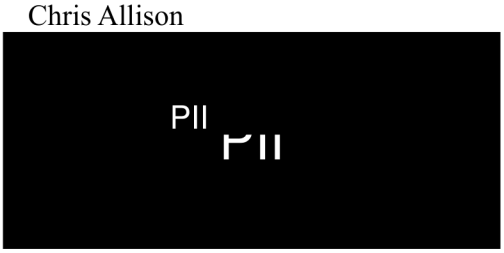
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Chris Allison



From: Cyn Curtis <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:26:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

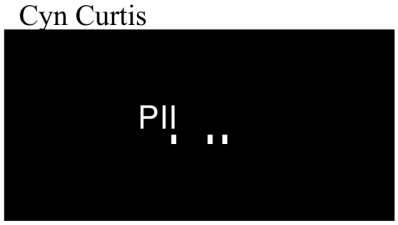
Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,

Cyn Curtis



From: Bianca Molgora <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:27:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

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Sincerely,

Bianca Molgora



From: Dave Welch <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:28:09 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

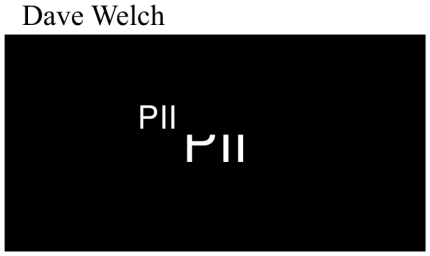
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Sincerely,

Dave Welch



From: Mary Endress <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:28:11 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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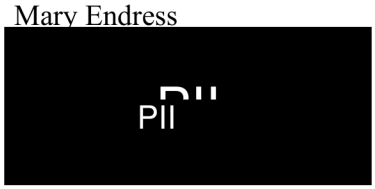
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Sincerely,

Mary Endress



From: David Ralls <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:30:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

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Sincerely,

David Ralls

PII
PII

From: John Gaperoni <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:31:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,

John Gaperoni



From: Andrew O'Neal <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:31:23 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other coloniesIn Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subjectWe are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their

legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Andrew O'Neal

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php

[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Ronald Richardson <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:32:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Religious Liberty Commn. .,

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Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,

Ronald Richardson

[redacted]

From: Carol Patterson <[redacted]>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:33:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

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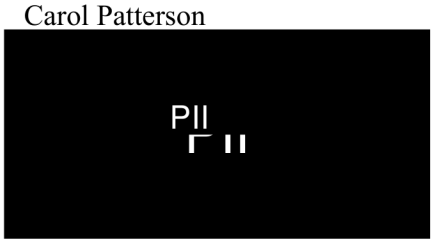
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Sincerely,

Carol Patterson



From: deborah bruner <PII>
To: "Religious Liberty CommnMembers ." <PII>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Release of Draft Report – Individual
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 15:35:10 -0400
Importance: Normal

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Sincerely,

deborah bruner
PII
PII

From: Stephen Rouse <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 16:58:40 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Via EMAIL: mailto:[redacted]

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.
The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]
As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.
Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.
In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.
We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the

subject.
We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.
Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.
The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]
Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?
The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7] James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]
Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.
Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.
In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System,

Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."
We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.
We remain, Yours truly,

I agree wholeheartedly with the above recommendations and cannot stress strongly enough the criticality of this issue.
Dr. Stephen L. Rouse
LTC USA(R)

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Respectfully sent from my mobile app

From: Johnny Nix <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious Freedom
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 17:32:25 -0400
Importance: Normal

To Whom It May Concern:

As a citizen of Georgia and the United States, I respectfully urge our federal leaders to strengthen protections for religious liberty. The free exercise of religion is a God-given right recognized by the First Amendment and must never be treated as a secondary freedom. This includes the freedom to preach without restriction, ensuring that religious leaders can proclaim their beliefs openly and without fear of government interference.
The events of 2020 demonstrated how quickly churches could be compelled to close their doors. While public health is important, our nation must ensure that houses of worship are never again singled out or forced to cease gathering in ways that violate the free exercise of religion. Protecting the Church protects one of America's foundational liberties. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Johnny Nix
Sr Pastor
Pickett's Mill Baptist Church
[redacted]

From: Jennifer Rike <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment - Presidential Religious Liberty Commission draft report
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 17:40:38 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a resident of Texas I'm watching first hand the impact of blurring or removing the separation of Church and State. What has most visibly began as book banning has now infiltrated curriculum. Sadly the result is an extremely insular view of what is acceptable to educate our students. My representative, David Cook, continually praises this effort and excoriates Muslims focusing on Sharia Law. My question is how does this enable him to represent all his constituents. Extremists of all faiths do not represent every one of a faith. Christian Nationalist are a perfect example.

Every person residing in the United States with the exception of those with Native Americans and some Mexican heritage (yes Texas was created out of parts of Mexico). We are all children of immigrants. Those immigrants each arrived with their own beliefs and religions. What has made this great melting pot experiment work is the separation of Church and State. Without this separation we begin dealing with a very decisive "us"versus "them".

True Religious Liberty allows for all religions, not just one prescribed by a few. That does not reflect the true heritage of our great nation. The draft report released does not reflect our amazing multicultural nation. As usually happens with all drafts more work is needed.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Rike
Sent from my iPad

From: Jeanne Scull <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 18:59:29 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English

language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was

feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Jeanne Scull

From: Alpesh Mittal <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:05:36 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular

constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Alpesh Mittal

From: Robert Hines <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:06:55 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English

language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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We remain, Yours truly,

Miracles and Blessings

Pastor Robert Hines
Hephzibah Ministries
Wilderness Survival Camp
Imminent Advent Ministries
www.WildernessSurvivalCamp.com
https://patreon.com/HephzibahMinistries
Zelle [redacted]
PayPal paypal.me/HephzibahMinistries
CashApp $PastorRobertHines

From: Gladys Gilson <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:13:41 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English

language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

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Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

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We are Christians and patriots and love our country, and believe that the separation between religion and government was instituted as a safeguard by the Founding Fathers. We ask you to please consider our petition, as stated above

Yours truly,

Gladys Gilson

From: David Munson <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:18:21 -0400
Importance: Normal

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of

translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing

with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

David Munson of Sebring, Florida

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Gladys Gilson <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:27:51 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English

language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically.

We are Christians and patriots and love our country, and believe that the separation between religion and government was instituted as a safeguard by the Founding Fathers. We ask you to please consider our petition, as stated

Truly Yours

Gladys Gilson

From: AJ <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – DRAFT REPORT ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM – AJ cho
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:31:48 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Regards,

AJ cho

From: Marty Stone <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Religious Liberty Commission released draft report
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:47:13 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

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If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Respectfully yours,

Martin Stone

From: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Trump Administration’s Religious Liberty Commission Report
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 19:59:23 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Paul Netusil

From: Lee Gorman <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Religious Liberty Commission draft report
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 21:01:53 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle of the separation of church and state. The Commission's composition and process were dominated by exclusive viewpoints, sidelining the experiences of those with minority beliefs and reflecting the very favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it appears the Commission is favoring one narrow faith over all other beliefs. If the Commission finalizes this report, it will dangerously undermine religious liberty rather than protect it.

I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American.

Sincerely,

Lee Gorman

From: Ross Pinkerton <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - draft report - Ross Pinkerton
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 21:42:35 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Our founders realized that everyone benefits by minorities having rights to express themselves and that both the state and the church are stronger when separate.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Ross Kennedy-Shaffer Pinkerton

From: Brent Walker <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT-DRAFT REPORT-BRENT WALKER
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 21:53:33 -0400
Importance: Normal

Good evening,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission chose to downplay or underrepresent the experiences of those with minority beliefs, or no beliefs at all, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

From the proposed recommendations, it is clear that religious liberty is not the purpose of the Commission. The Establishment Clause of the Constitution protects every person of every faith, and critically, those of no faith, from government influence or preferential/detrimental treatment. As someone who does not follow any particular faith, the Commission's report is alarming, disturbing, and deeply worrisome in its recommendations to push religion into public life and advocate for a Christian Nationalist government.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Thank you,

Brent Walker

From: Mia <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 21:56:28 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews,

and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from

the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Mirriam Norte

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[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.

[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Faith LaCelle <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 22:09:47 -0400
Importance: Normal

To our esteemed Department of Justice,

The following letter expresses my deeply held convictions regarding the recent recommendations of the Religious Liberty Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While I am mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which I agree with, I write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As a citizen and student of history, and as a Christian, I am alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

I respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. I ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. I respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

I am concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. I would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] I have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

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I respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written

and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which I would enthusiastically support.

Together with those who share these concerns, I remain, Yours truly,

Lindsey Faith LaCelle

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Marie Wakefield <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT Religious Liberty Commission Report [Marie Wakefield]
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 23:12:04 -0400
Importance: Normal

The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits the government from establishing an official religion or favoring one religion over another. This clause is part of the broader principle of separation of church and state. The Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause together read: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

--
Marie Wakefield
[redacted]

From: Karishma Prakash <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Wed, 08 Jul 2026 23:43:22 -0400
Importance: Normal

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews,

and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

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Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

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The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

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We remain, Yours truly

Karishma Prakash

From: Lindy Roeske <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 00:05:18 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

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This is deeply concerning and we respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

Yours truly,

Melynda Roeske

From: ALICE POLESKY <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Religious Liberty Commission Report - Alice Polesky
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 00:47:47 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

Freedom of conscience belongs to all Americans.

From: Shirleane Chadwick <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 00:52:37 -0400
Importance: Normal

To: The Department of Justice

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews,

and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

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We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Shirleane Chadwick

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Sent from my iPhone

From: lea lupac-guerrero <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 04:08:03 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Via EMAIL: [redacted]

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

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We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer

From: Edsel Sapian <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Recommendations of Religious Liberty Commission
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 04:54:39 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

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We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Edsel and Josie Sapian
Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer

From: Tom Hughes <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 07:37:39 -0400
Importance: Normal

Please add my concerns about this issue of Religious Liberty.

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Via EMAIL: [redacted]

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and

others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

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We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Thanks for listening to my concerns

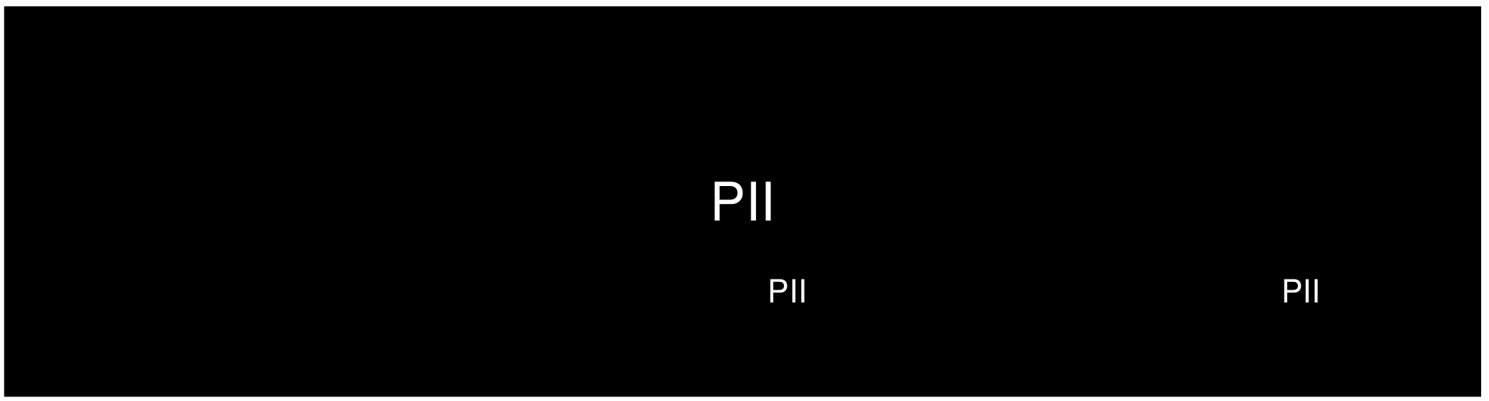
Tom Hughes

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Tom Hughes, Pastor



“Do not, through impatience, cut the knot of difficulty, making matters hopeless. **Let God untangle the snarled-up threads for you. He is wise enough to manage the complications of our lives.** He has skill and tact. We cannot always see His plans; we must wait patiently their unfolding and not mar and destroy them. He will reveal them to us in His own good time. Seek for unity; cultivate love and conformity to Christ in all things. He is the source of unity and strength. . . . If you do as God would have you, His blessing will come into the church.”—*Lift Him Up*, p. 218.

"He hath shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" **Micah 6:8**



From: Karen Cunningham <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 07:59:36 -0400
Importance: Normal

To the Department of Justice,

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

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Ashley & Karen Cunningham

Citizens of this great Country

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
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https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: LaWanda Simpson <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Recommendations of Religious Liberty
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 09:58:22 -0400
Importance: Normal

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In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of

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[THE UNDERSIGNED]

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[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
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[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law,
1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

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PII
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From: JERRY TIPLER <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Jerrold Tipler-Religious Liberty Commission Do Not Finalize its Report
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 10:16:07 -0400
Importance: Normal

The separation of church and state has protected Americans of every faith and none for 250 years.

> As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.
>
> Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.
>
> Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely

From: EVELYN KOSTER <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment E Koster
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 10:17:00 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

This country was built on Freedom of and FROM religion. Keep religion out of public spaces.

Protect MY religious liberty.
E. Koster
Sun City AZ senior

From: Douglas Berger <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Religious Liberty Commission Final Report – Douglas Berger
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 11:00:35 -0400
Importance: Normal

I am a Humanist and the Religious Liberty Commission that was formed excluded people like me and favored Christianity. That violates the 1st amendment demanding government neutrality with religion.

Christianity isn't persecuted in the US and in fact is privileged by the current courts and government above any other religion.

Humanist International compiles a more comprehensive religious liberty report that addresses issues in all countries of the world.

As a US citizen I ask that the commission reject the final report and disband since it didn't address real issues about religious liberty or include people from other religious perspectives.

--
Douglas Berger - President

Secular Humanists of Western Lake Erie

[redacted]

From: Cynthia Cavanagh <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Religious Liberty Commission - C. Cavanagh
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 11:16:51 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Committee:

This report has recently come to my attention. As a citizen of the U.S., I care deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief. I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations in the best interests of our country.

Separation of church and state is a foundation of this country and of religious freedom. It seems the Commission was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians in composition and process. Further, it seems the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent. It seems the Commission could have done much better than this.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it seems that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs. This does not align well with the founding principles of this country and, in the end, would likely consume resources that could be better used to strengthen communities in ways other than government favoritism toward particular religious, magical beliefs.

Finalization of this report by the Commission would seem to dangerously undermine religious freedom. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs. That is America.

Regards,

C. Cavanagh

From: Matthew Brown <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment – Religious Liberty Commission Report– Matthew Brown
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 11:49:01 -0400
Importance: Normal

Hello,

I am a white American Christian man who grew up going to private Christian schools my entire life. I don't regret my time in Christian schools and I enjoyed my experience. I have some thoughts on the religious liberty commission report.

The separation of church and state is good for both. It's a constitutional principle that explains how our religious liberty is protected by the First Amendment. It is as American as Apple pie. To hear politicians like Mike Johnson say it is a "misnomer" is a blatant lie and mischaracterization of what this country was founded upon. Religion needs to be protected from the state.

The Johnson Amendment protects houses of worship from partisan politicking and ensures fair play in our campaigns. If churches want to play politics, then they can pay taxes too.

Public funds should go to public schools, not private schools. I say this as someone who never attended a public school, but my children do. Private school vouchers are a scam to allow wealthy people to get their kid's school paid for by tax dollars. It's another example of socialism for the rich and rugged capitalism and individualism for everyone else.

Public schools should not be pushing sectarian faith, like forcing the posting of the Ten Commandments or pushing official prayer. This is not religious liberty. It's forcing a specific type of religion onto everyone else. It's anti American.

Christian Nationalism is the greatest threat to this country and to the American church.

"Thank you for your attention to this matter."

Best Regards,
Matthew Brown

Sent from my iPhone

From: Aundrea Sullivan <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT- [Religious Liberty Commission draft report]- Aundrea Sullivan
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 11:50:46 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

I do not want Christian Nationalism taught to my children. I do not want it embedded into our military. It belongs nowhere near our democracy. We have freedom to practice religion, but our constitution also allows freedom FROM religion. How do we accomplish that if our nation's policies are biblically backed? There's no way to avoid it, therefore my right to not be ruled by Christianity will be trampled. Do the right thing and scrap this report.

From: alyce williams <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 12:13:24 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026.

While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice
"issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.
Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies.
They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented.
Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and

early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not
from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives.
We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?
The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

Sincerely,

Alyce Williams

1. https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-
2. liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
3. Ibid, [Emphasis added].
4. https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-
5. state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
6. https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
7. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMw/WYB8; https://

www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA

1. https://www.loc.gov/loc/|cib/9806/danpre.html

2. https://www.loc.gov/loc//cib/9806/danpre.html -Jefferson
3. here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
4. James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious
5. Assessments
6. Matthew 22:21
7. James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
8. John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Jo Townsend <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Commission Report – Jo Townsend
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 12:17:08 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Thank you,
Jo Townsend

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get Outlook for Android

From: Dave and Mary Hansen <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Mary Kay Hansen
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 12:29:55 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

My name is Mary Kay Hansen, I am an attorney who was raised Catholic, attending parochial school through high school

The Establishment Clause protects religious liberty by ensuring that the government does not interfere with individuals' choice as to what religion they may choose and honor, be it Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslin, Mormon, or other. That is consistent with our foundation for the American Revolution when we overthrew tyranny of thought, speech, RELIGION, and so much more.

I do not want the government in my business, and telling me directly or indireclty what my religion should be. Nor do I want this for my neighbor.

Thank you - Mary Kay Hansen

From: Jo Townzer <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of Church and State
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 12:35:21 -0400
Importance: Normal

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; "

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Thank you,
Brent Townsend

From: phandke <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commissio <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Barron's Session 1 Comments
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 12:44:19 -0400
Importance: Normal

Barron's comments session one on Washington State lacked any context. SNAP is a Roman Catholic Survivors Network of priestly sexual crimes against children. Ask them for their newsletters on Washington State.

Sincerely,
PF Handke

From: aprovan725 <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Separation of Church and State – Andrew Provan
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 15:21:31 -0400
Importance: Normal

To Whom it may concern,

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Thank you,
A. Provan

Sent from Proton Mail for Android.

From: Emily Eckart <[redacted]>
To: Religious Liberty Commission <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment from Emily Eckart
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 16:07:43 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Members of the Religious Liberty Commission,

I am writing to state my strong objection to the draft report that was recently published.

The primary function of the Establishment Clause is to safeguard religious freedom by requiring the government to maintain strict neutralityneither endorsing nor disadvantaging any faith. While every citizen retains the absolute right to personal prayer, worship, and spiritual expression, these personal freedoms do not grant the state the right to fund religious practices or use its power to elevate one belief system above the rest. Unfortunately, this report repeatedly overlooks that vital boundary. It discounts the traditional interpretation of the Establishment Clause and ignores substantial historical proof that the Framers designed a distinct line of separation between church and state.

Furthermore, many of the proposals outlined in the report would deepen government involvement in religion rather than safeguarding individual liberty. Specifically, the report suggests discarding foundational First Amendment precedents, increasing state-sponsored religious promotion in public schools and agencies, and overturning the Johnson Amendment to allow tax-exempt houses of worship to participate in partisan politics. It also recommends reviving the defunct 2018 Religious Liberty Task Force, establishing specialized hotlines to champion specific religious grievances, and vetting judicial nominees through a rigid ideological lens. Collective, these measures jeopardize our constitutional dedication to a pluralistic society where believers and nonbelievers are treated with equal respect.

Ultimately, this report compromises the freedom of conscience that belongs to every American, no matter their personal convictions. I urge you to rescind this report and honor our First Amendment protections.

Thank you for your time.

From: Mona Garvin <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of Church and State
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 16:33:03 -0400
Importance: Normal

After reading the Pillar of Freedom report on replacing separation of Church and State with a "bridge" I am concerned since the wall between the two was intended to protect the church not constrain it. Joining the two will likely lead to the loss of religious freedom clearly being something that our country was based on. Please keep church and state separate.

Sincerely
Mona Garvin
Cadillac, MI

From: Daniel <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 16:36:16 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3] As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.

Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all

forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."
We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.
We remain, Yours truly,

Daniel Trconic

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/

From: Samuel Mason <[redacted]>
To: [redacted]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Religious Liberty Commission Report
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 16:40:00 -0400
Importance: Normal

Understanding how this administration works and the complete lack of concern they have of the public's opinion outside of their own interests, I almost hesitated sending this as a waste of time. But this is too important. The public cannot stand by while christofascists attempt to create a theocracy out of a country intended to have not only religious freedom but a lack of religious lording over daily life.

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

From: Nacido Del Sol <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment on Draft Report – Religious Liberty Commission
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 16:44:41 -0400
Importance: Normal

To the Religious Liberty Commission,

I am writing as a private citizen to submit a comment on the Commission's draft report, in advance of the July 13, 2026 deadline.

I want to register my support for the historic principle of separation of church and state, and my concern about aspects of the draft report that seem to move away from it.

As a Christian, I believe genuine faith must be free and uncoerced to be genuine at all. Scripture consistently draws a distinction between the authority of civil government and the authority of conscience — rendering to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. Whenever that line has been erased throughout history, the outcome has followed a consistent pattern: whichever religious position holds government power uses that power, sooner or later, to compel or penalize those who believe differently. This is not a hypothetical risk; it is the near-universal record of church-state fusion across centuries and across traditions, regardless of which faith held the reins.

The safeguard of separation has never been hostility to religion. It has been the very thing that has allowed religious liberty to flourish for people of every faith and none in this country. I would respectfully urge the Commission to strengthen, rather than reconsider, that safeguard in its final report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Bessler
[redacted]

From: Jim Byrnes <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment- Your draft report, from James Byrnes
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 17:04:48 -0400
Importance: Normal

I wish to comment as follows: I believe your report to be terribly unfair to US citizens whose religious freedom is NOT being enhanced but, instead, reduced by recommendations to use our government to PROMOTE religion, direct tax dollars for religious purposes and to eliminate separation of church and state, in violation of the founding principles of the USA.
My recommendation is that you disband your apparently biased committee, withdraw the report and refrain from making such anti-American suggestions..

I also note that you seem to be restricting the voices of citizens who wish to comment by imposing a very short and unreasonable deadline for comments.

Thank you for considering this message.

James J Byrnes
Vero Beach, Florida

From: James Bishop <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 17:06:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father,

who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

James Bishop

From: Joonhyo Choi <[redacted]>
To: [redacted]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 17:09:01 -0400
Importance: Normal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English

language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

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We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: "J. Polihronov" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 17:22:45 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

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We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

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declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

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We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;

[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
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[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

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J. Polihronov, Ph.D.
In the News: Click Here

From: Joe Irwin <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious Liberty
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 17:26:48 -0400
Importance: Normal

“I agree with Pillar of Freedom’s comments. Please implement them.”

From: Andrea Wilson <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – [RELIGIOUS LIBERTY] – [ANDREA WILSON]
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 17:38:04 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Commissioners,

As a concerned citizen who cares deeply about democracy and the freedom of and from religion, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the constitution framework that protects every American of all religions and beliefs.

Thank you,

Andrea Wilson

From: Susan Houston <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - RLC report - Susan Houston
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 18:06:04 -0400
Importance: Normal

In reading about the report from RLC, I believe Lt. Gov Patrick idea that church-state separation is not a constitutional principle really shows his lack ot understanding or perhaps not having read the Constitution. Separation of church and state is absolutely a principle of the Constitution (read Jefferson's comments).

I am very strongly opposed to churches being involved in politics. Each person can express their political views, but NOT FROM THE PULPIT.

Our taxpayer dollars should definitely go to support public schools, but if parents want to send their children to private school, that is their choice, but why should I pay for it.

Come on, quit acting so stupid and clueless, I am ashamed that tax payer dollars were spent on such idiotic and anti-American concepts.

From: Ashley Cunningham <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 18:29:56 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed

the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

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The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified

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James Madison wrote, “It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it.” [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord’s words that we “render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God’s.” [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that “The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State.” [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, “In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments.”

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly, Ashley Cunningham

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPlfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Johnathan Dixon <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 18:48:49 -0400
Importance: Normal

Greetings,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

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We remain, Yours truly,

Johnathan Dixon

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[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: dahyanerra toney <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Johnson amendment enforced
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 19:10:48 -0400
Importance: Normal

Good afternoon, I'd like to make a comment on the draft report from the religious liberty commission. I agree with the pillar of freedom's comments. In addition to respectfully objecting to the repealing of the Johnson amendment and that it may be fully enforced.

From: Gerald Winslow <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious liberty
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 19:22:46 -0400
Importance: Normal

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this message in support of the great American tradition of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. I understand that there are those people who want to have our government function on the basis of religious convictions. For example, they would like to have prayer offered in our public schools. They also want the 10 Commandments displayed in public buildings. In my view, this is a dangerous departure from the vision of our founders, who insisted that the government not play favorites when it comes to religion.

I recommend a book by John M Barry, with the title Roger Williams in the Creation of the American Soul. This carefully researched volume tells the story of how difficult it was to establish the principle of religious liberty. We are indebted to Roger Williams and countless other pioneers in the American experiment, who risked their lives to lead us in the direction of respect for religious diversity. As tempting as is the current wave of support for so-called Christian nationalism, that is a pathway that will lead to endless strife and the inevitable marginalization and eventually persecution of religious minorities.

Please add my name to the list of those who are calling on you to honor the American tradition, ensconced in our Bill Rights, that preserves religious liberty.

Respectfully,

Gerald Winslow, Redlands California

From: Vina Osborn <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 19:43:28 -0400
Importance: Normal

To whomever it may concern,

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As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain.
Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Vina Osborn

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].

[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Mary Beth Cook Dyer <dyermarybeth@gmail.com>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <RLC@usdoj.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of church and state
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 19:46:52 -0400
Importance: Normal

I agree with the Pillar of Freedom's comments. Please implement them.

From: [redacted]
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – Chapter 12: Faith Under Fire in America's Houses of Worship – Dr. Ché Ahn
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 19:58:14 -0400
Importance: Normal

[redacted]

Religious Liberty Commission
U.S. Department of Justice

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment on the Draft Report of the Presidential Religious Liberty Commission. I am deeply grateful to President Donald J. Trump for establishing this Commission and for recognizing that religious liberty is not a secondary liberty, but America's first freedom. I also thank Chairman Dan Patrick, Vice Chairman Dr. Ben Carson, and every Commissioner who has labored to examine the past, present, and future of religious liberty in our nation.

As a pastor, immigrant, and American citizen, I believe the United States is exceptional because our Founders recognized that our rights do not come from government. They come from our Creator. The Declaration of Independence declares that all men are "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights," beginning with life and liberty. The First Amendment then protects the free exercise of religion because a free people must be free to worship God, speak truth, form conscience, raise families, educate children, and serve their communities without government hostility or coercion.

I strongly support the Commission's work to restore a proper understanding of religious liberty in American life. Faith has never been the enemy of freedom. Properly understood, faith forms the moral foundation necessary for freedom to endure. John Adams warned that our Constitution was made only for "a moral and religious people." I agree. When faith, conscience, and moral formation are pushed out of public life, government expands to fill the vacuum. But when faith is protected, families are strengthened, communities flourish, and citizens are better equipped to self-govern.

My own life is a testimony to the power of faith to transform a person and serve society. I was born in South Korea and came to America with my family in search of freedom and opportunity. As a teenager, I was a high school dropout, homeless for a season, and struggling with addiction. On May 25, 1973, Jesus Christ changed my life. Since then, I have spent more than five decades contending for revival, calling the Church to spiritual awakening, and mobilizing believers to seek God for transformation in cities and nations. I have had the privilege of serving as president of The Call, where we gathered hundreds of thousands on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., and in cities across America, crying out for revival, repentance, and a return to God.

Because of that calling, I cannot remain silent when government treats churches and houses of worship as nonessential.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, California placed severe restrictions on houses of worship, even while allowing many secular activities to continue. Harvest Rock Church and Harvest International Ministry challenged those restrictions because we believed the First Amendment does not disappear during a crisis. We were not opposing reasonable health and safety measures. We were defending the constitutional principle that government may not treat worship as less essential than secular activity.

Before filing that lawsuit, I prayed and sought the Lord for confirmation. I sensed Him impress Joshua 1:9 upon my heart: "Be strong and courageous… for the Lord your God is with you." That Scripture became more than an encouragement; it became a mandate. I also held firmly to Hebrews 10:25, which instructs believers not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but to continue encouraging one another. In a season when fear, isolation, grief, and uncertainty were overwhelming families across our state, I knew the Church had a biblical and constitutional responsibility to gather, worship, pray, preach, sing, and minister to the hurting.

What followed was not an easy or symbolic stand. It was a costly, public, and prolonged battle against one of the most powerful state governments in the nation. Harvest Rock Church and Harvest International Ministry faced the threat of fines, penalties, public criticism, and legal defeat. We lost in lower courts. We were told, in effect, that the state's emergency powers could override the Church's constitutional right to gather before God and serve people in crisis. But we could not accept that conclusion, because the First Amendment does not disappear in a crisis, and the Church does not cease to be essential when people are afraid.

By God's grace, we persevered. We appealed again and again, and the United States Supreme Court intervened more than once in our case. The Court ultimately ruled that California could not continue enforcing its discriminatory ban on indoor worship against Harvest Rock Church and other houses of worship. That ruling was not merely a legal technicality; it was a turning point for churches across California and a signal to the nation that emergency authority has constitutional limits.

The final result was historic. California entered into a settlement that produced the first statewide permanent injunction in the nation against discriminatory COVID restrictions on churches and places of worship. The state was ordered to pay $1.35 million in attorney's fees and costs. More importantly, the door was reopened for churches to gather, worship, preach, sing, pray, and minister without being treated as less essential than secular institutions.

I do not share this as a matter of personal pride. I share it because religious liberty is preserved only when someone is willing to stand. In that season, I was not fighting only for Harvest Rock Church. I was standing for pastors who felt intimidated, congregations that felt abandoned, families who needed hope, and houses of worship across America that deserved the full protection of the First Amendment. That battle confirmed for me that no governor, legislature, agency, or emergency order should ever again be allowed to silence the Church or suspend the free exercise of religion.

For that reason, I especially support the Commission's recommendation that houses of worship and faith-based nonprofits be classified as essential during emergencies. This is one of the most important lessons of the pandemic. Churches feed the hungry, comfort the grieving, counsel families, help people overcome addiction, support mental health, bury the dead, pray with the sick, serve the elderly, and provide hope in moments of fear. In a true emergency, the ministry of the Church becomes more essential, not less.

I respectfully urge the Commission to strengthen this recommendation in the final report by making clear that religious liberty is not merely comparable to secular activities, but is an inalienable right that government has no authority to infringe upon. No state or local government should ever have the power to categorically close houses of worship, because the free exercise of religion is not granted by government—it is a God-given right that precedes it. While government may pursue public safety, it must do so within strict constitutional limits, recognizing that it cannot suspend or override the free exercise of religion under any circumstance.

I also support the Commission's recommendations to provide clear, accessible resources that help pastors, faith leaders, houses of worship, and religious nonprofits understand and confidently exercise their constitutional rights. Many pastors during COVID did not know what they were legally permitted to do. Some were afraid of fines, threats, public shaming, or government retaliation. A "Know Your Rights" resource from the Department of Justice would be valuable for religious leaders across the country, especially in states where hostility toward biblical faith is increasing. Such resources should not be framed as granting or defining rights, but as clarifying protections that already exist under the Constitution.

I further encourage the Commission to recommend stronger First Amendment training for public officials and law enforcement. Too often, conflicts arise not only because of bad laws, but because local officials misunderstand the Constitution. Religious exercise is not merely a private belief held inside the heart. It includes worship, preaching, gathering,

serving, educating, feeding the poor, counseling the brokenhearted, and speaking publicly from one's convictions. Government officials must be trained to understand that religious liberty is a living, public, and constitutionally protected freedom.

The Commission should also recognize and safeguard the rights of parents to direct the religious upbringing, education, and moral formation of their children. Parents are the primary stewards of their children—not the state. A free society cannot survive when government separates children from the faith and values of their parents. Protecting religious liberty must include protecting parents from government policies that undermine their conscience, faith, and authority in the home. Scripture affirms this responsibility in Proverbs 22:6, which instructs parents to "train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

I also urge the Commission to recognize that faith-based organizations possess the inherent right to serve in accordance with their beliefs without government interference or coercion. Churches and ministries should not be excluded from public-private partnerships, denied grants, targeted by agencies, debanked, censored, or punished because they hold traditional biblical convictions. Religious organizations serve the addicted, homeless, incarcerated, orphaned, elderly, immigrant, and poor. America should welcome that service, not penalize it.

I also respectfully urge the Commission to address the ongoing concern surrounding the Johnson Amendment and its chilling effect on churches and houses of worship. For decades, pastors have often been made to feel that speaking with moral clarity about public issues, candidates, elections, and the civic responsibilities of believers could place their church's tax-exempt status at risk. This has created confusion, fear, and self-censorship in the very institutions the First Amendment was designed to protect most strongly.

While many have called for a full repeal of the Johnson Amendment, I respectfully ask the Commission to consider an even more precise and constitutionally grounded recommendation: that Congress create a clear statutory exemption for churches, houses of worship, and their integrated auxiliaries. Such an exemption would recognize the unique First Amendment protections afforded to religious institutions while leaving the broader rules governing secular charities in place.

Churches are not merely charitable organizations. They are worshiping communities, moral teachers, and constitutionally protected religious bodies. Their speech often touches matters of public concern because Scripture speaks to life, justice, family, marriage, poverty, immigration, government, righteousness, and the moral responsibilities of citizens. A pastor should not have to fear federal punishment for applying biblical truth to the issues affecting the nation.

I respectfully plead with the Commission to add this appeal to its final report as a recommended action for Congress: protect churches and houses of worship from the

chilling effect of the Johnson Amendment by establishing a clear statutory exemption that safeguards pastoral speech, moral teaching, and religious guidance on matters of public life. This would not compel any church to engage politically, nor would it turn churches into campaign committees. It would simply restore confidence that the federal government may not intimidate, silence, or penalize religious leaders for speaking from their faith and conscience.

At the heart of this issue is a simple truth: government should serve the people, not control them. The First Amendment was not written to protect government from religion. It was written to protect the people's right to freely exercise religion from government interference. Religious liberty is not a privilege granted by elected officials. It is a God-given right recognized and protected by the Constitution.

I believe righteousness and justice are the foundation of good government, and mercy and truth must walk together. But I also understand that America's religious liberty protects people of every faith and even those of no faith. My defense of religious liberty is not only for Christians. It is for every American who believes the government should not coerce conscience, silence conviction, or punish peaceful worship.

President Trump's establishment of this Commission is timely and necessary. America has recently marked her 250th anniversary, and this is a sacred moment to remember who we are. We are not a nation where government grants freedom from the top down. We are a nation where God-given rights are secured by constitutional limits on government power. To forget that is to lose the very foundation of liberty.

I respectfully ask the Commission to finalize a strong report that:

1. Recognizes religious liberty as America's first freedom;
2. Classifies houses of worship and faith-based nonprofits as essential during emergencies;
3. Provides clear guidance that religious worship may not be treated less favorably than comparable secular activity;
4. Provides practical "Know Your Rights" resources that clarify existing constitutional protections for pastors and religious leaders;
5. Trains public officials and law enforcement on First Amendment protections;
6. Protects parents' rights to direct the religious and moral upbringing of their children;
7. Defends faith-based organizations from government retaliation, discrimination, censorship, or coercion;
8. Recommends that Congress create a clear statutory exemption from the Johnson Amendment for churches, houses of worship, and their integrated auxiliaries, recognizing their unique First Amendment protections while leaving broader rules for secular charities in place; and
9. Encourages every branch of government to honor the Constitution's protection of free exercise.

Thank you for your service to our nation and for your courage in defending religious liberty for future generations. May America continue to be a nation where faith is free, conscience is protected, families are strengthened, and every citizen may worship God without fear.

Respectfully submitted,

PII

From: Kara Mitchell <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pillar of Freedom
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 20:03:25 -0400
Importance: Normal

I agree with Pillar of freedoms comments, please please implement them! I would like my children to have the same religious freedom as I did growing up! And if this changes then who knows what will happen next. I feel that as an American Citizen, we should have the right to religious freedom! My religious views are Christian but not just your average day Baptist or catholic. I want to be able to praise Jesus on the Sabbath like He commanded! Thank you for you time and consideration! -Kara Mitchell of Hickory NC

From: ximena paola mejia sanchez <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Satanic Ritual by Donal Trump
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 20:34:12 -0400
Importance: Normal

Good Evening

I want to request for get more informed about the Laws that Allow Donald Trump for to do Satanic Rituals to a woman (Ximena Mejia Sanchez) and Children (Stephen and Sebastian Lezama Mejia) in PUBLIC, and for do deals and own and demand over life and organ of us. Also for sent emails to Open AI allowing put AI technology in Brain and body in us 3, and then for sent emails to Midland District Court for put in Jail Ximena Mejia Sanchez WITHOUT ANY REASON, just for be a mother and figth in legal way for them and off course for discover him, his LONG TIME satanist in United State for personal and Goverment purpose with the help of POWERFULL WITH, BARBARA ELLIS

WHY?
WHY THIS MOTHER FUCKER HAS RIGTHS OVER MY LIFE AND CHILDREN LIFE

WHY THIS COUNTRY HAS PLENTY KNOWLEDGE 3 YEARS AGO, whatching in APP and seen the experiments in humans with the MIX, witchcraff and AI

WHY NO ONE STOP

My children and I are sick and need this STOP, his satanic need to continue with other people NOT WITH ME AND MY CHILDREN

THIS MOTHER FUCKER OF DONALD TRUMP NEED TO RESPECT

maldito desgraciado
malnadico

que le haga rituales y brujeria a MELANIA

MALDITO
MIL VECES MALDITO

From: george Johnson <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 20:44:19 -0400
Importance: Normal

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring

that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

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Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists,

ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

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In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Victoria Brant

[1] https://www.justice.gov/.../president-trumps-religious...
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/.../dan-patrick-church-state...
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social...;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/.../adam.../index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Chuck Austin <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] separation of church and state
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 20:58:34 -0400
Importance: Normal

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was

a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings. Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: “Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should ‘make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.” [7]

James Madison wrote, “It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it.” [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord’s words that we “render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God’s.” [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that “The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State.” [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, “In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments.”

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

[THE UNDERSIGNED]

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
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[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765. https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: cheryl Underwood <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - Separation of Church and State- Cheryl Underwood
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 21:02:45 -0400
Importance: Normal

Dear Members of the Religious Liberty Commission:

I agree with the Pillar of Freedom's comments - please implement them. I am a person of faith and believe that Removing the separation of church and state will bring much more harm than good, especially objecting to the repealing of the Johnson amendment.

Thank you!
Sent from my iPhone

From: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT -- DO NOT FINALIZE THE RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION REPORT -- B. PETERSON
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 21:10:22 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,
Beau Peterson
[redacted]
Portland, Oregon

From: Stefan <stefanrburnham@gmail.com>
To: "RLC@usdoj.gov" <RLC@usdoj.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of church and state
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 21:11:22 -0400
Importance: Normal

I agree with ‘Pillar of Freedom’s comment. Please implement them.

Stefan R. Burnham

From: James A Clark Jr <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Trump's Religious Liberty Commission must abandon its sham report
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 21:24:57 -0400
Importance: Normal

As a humanist and a concerned citizen who cares deeply about American democracy and the freedom of religion and belief, I am submitting this comment to urge the Religious Liberty Commission to withdraw its June 26, 2026 draft report and abandon its recommendations.

Religious freedom in the United States rests on the principle that there is a separation between church and state. The Commission's composition and process was dominated overwhelmingly by extremist Christians, and the Commission sidelined the experiences of those with minority beliefs, reflecting exactly the favoritism the Establishment Clause was written to prevent.

Based on the rhetoric on display during hearings and the resulting proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is a tool of a Christian Nationalist movement seeking to use the federal government to privilege one narrow faith over all other beliefs.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be dangerously undermining it. I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic, secular constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

From: Rolando Mederos <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 21:31:03 -0400
Importance: Normal

Hello there,

My name is Rolando Mederos and I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations of the Religious Liberty Committee submitted to President Donald J. Trump on June 26, 2026. While we are mindful of the Committee's labors, which resulted in the 12 recommendations released June 26, certain of which we agree with, we write to voice our concerns and objections to the Committee's first and ninth recommendations [1] and its obviously insufficient consideration of the warnings of the Founding Fathers of the dangers of a union of church and state or the many lessons of history regarding same.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Justice "issue guidance clarifying the proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and separation of church and state." [2] At the formal release of the Committee's recommendations on the same day, Committee Chair Dan Patrick publicly stated that "the separation of church and state is not in the constitution" and that the phrase "has no constitutional basis." [3]

As citizens and students of history, and as Christians, we are alarmed lest the flawed and unconstitutional view of the Chair of the Committee of the so-called "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" prove influential or worse, instructive, to the Department of Justice. If the Committee's opinion of the so-called "proper understanding" of the Establishment Clause is the same as that of its Chair, it is apparent that its understanding is not proper, but rather improper.

Founding Father, "Father of the Constitution", and fourth President of the United States, James Madison, contradicted Chair Dan Patrick's claim that the separation of church and state is not in the Constitution. Madison stated that "Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion & Govt in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies, may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history." According to James Madison, the separation of church and state is in the Constitution. As to whether James Madison, who is the principal author of the Establishment Clause, or Dan Patrick, is the greater authority on this subject, we think it not difficult for reasonably minded people to ascertain. Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

We respectfully ask that the Department of Justice, in considering the issue of public guidance of the separation of church and state, consider the history of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania and early Founding Father, who was repeatedly jailed for his religious faith in England. The Pennsylvania Colony became a haven, not from atheist persecutors but from religious persecutors who did not believe in the separation of church and state. The same is true of Roger Williams, founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who was ordered arrested for declaring that the civil magistrate cannot enforce the first table of the Decalogue. We ask that the Committee take into account the brutal public whipping of President Abraham Lincoln's five-time great-grandfather, Obadiah Holmes, in the Massachusetts colony, for the "crime" of religious dissent. Obadiah Holmes was not whipped by atheists. He was whipped by Puritan bigots who did not believe in the separation of church and state. We respectfully request that the Department of Justice consider this history in the issuance of public guidance on the subject.

We are concerned that the Committee neglected to take into account the impact of the separation of church and state on the other rights codified in the First Amendment. Free speech and freedom of the press, for example, owe their flourishing in the modern world in large part to the separation of church and state in America. Prior to the protections in the First Amendment, the Roman Catholic Church for centuries maintained a list of banned books called the Index Librorum Prohibitorum. The books were subject to confiscation, and the possession of them resulted in the punishment of the owner.

Unfortunately, the Committee makes no mention of the censorship in this context of Galileo and Kepler, Kant and Locke, John Milton and Maimonedes, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, David Hume and Edward Gibbon, and many others, all at the behest of the Roman Papacy, which is itself a union of church and state. Free speech in the Western world is the legacy of those who risked the wrath of a unified church and state, often at the cost of their lives. We would also ask that the Department of Justice consider the repeated modern calls from the papal power today for the censorship of the internet and the suppression of free speech, contrary to the First Amendment. [4] We have no doubt that the censorship of Galileo, Kepler, Milton, and others was prosecuted under the justification of the censorship of misinformation, also.

The Roman Church was not alone in this persecution, either. We would ask the Department of Justice in its formulation of public guidance on the separation of church and state to remember the religious persecutions carried out at the behest of John Calvin in Geneva against religious dissenters such as Michael Servetus, who paid with his life for his writings and teachings.

Servetus was executed by a union of church and state. We are concerned at the public statements of those who would create such a system in America. [5]

Therefore, we respectfully ask, what proper guidance can the Department of Justice hope to give to the public on the "proper understanding of the Establishment Clause and the separation of church and state" if it is directed in its object by a Committee and a Committee Chair, who has neglected to more fully analyze the reasons for the separation of church and state, or the reasons why the United States codified the disestablishment of church and state in the First Amendment in the first instance?

The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

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Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

A Proud American Citizen,

Rolando Mederos

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
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[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

Sent from my iPhone

From: Daniel Matthews <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of church and state
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 21:34:32 -0400
Importance: Normal

Sent from my iPhone

As a grateful and respecting citizen of the United States of America I earnestly urge that no person, group, or organization make any decisions or recommendations that in any way may possibly alter or impact my right or ability to live my personal freedom to worship or live in accordance with the dictates of my personal conscientious convictions and choices in keeping with my relationship with God.

Respectfully yours with gratitude for your important role and influence.
Daniel G. Matthews
[redacted]

From: Darlene Castellano <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Recommendations of religious liberty commission
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 21:58:25 -0400
Importance: Normal

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TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Via EMAIL: [redacted]

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

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Certainly, the Founding Fathers were all aware of the persecution of the Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and others in some of the colonies. They had seen firsthand the ear croppings, whippings, imprisonment, and hangings in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In Europe, the persecution of the martyrs is well documented. Today we take the Bible for granted but forget that William Tyndale was executed for translating the Bible into the English language, not by atheists but by religious bigots. It was a union of church and state that suppressed speech and the freedom of the press in England. It was a union of church and state that prohibited the work of translation of the Bible, which changed the world. It was a union of church and state that necessitated his flight to Europe. It was a union of church and state that killed him.

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The reference to the wall of separation between church and state is not only mentioned by President Thomas Jefferson in the letter to the Danbury Baptists, which, of course, it is. [6] What is often left out of the narrative is that Jefferson said that he personally believed that the principle of the separation of church and state is codified in the Constitution. Therein, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State." [7]

James Madison wrote, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it." [8]

Lastly, we object to the recommendation of the Committee that the Johnson Amendment be removed. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are mindful of Our Lord's words that we "render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God the things that are God's." [9] Jesus Christ established the principle of the separation of church and state and taught that what belongs to God cannot be rendered to Caesar. The application of this teaching is that religionists, ambitious for civil power, and politicians, ambitious for their endorsement, are to be kept separate in the American system of politics, as the Constitution requires. The union of church and state results in the corruption of both, a result that neither should desire, and neither can afford.

Madison stated that "The number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, & the devotion of the people have been manifestly increased by the total separation of the Church from the State." [10] And he was right. If the Johnson Amendment is removed, religionists who want civil power will publicly stump and promise their votes and congregational dollars in exchange for political favors, and the politicians will be doubtless all too eager to reciprocate in the form of legislation that the religionists desire, provided they will aid their attempts to gain office.

In his anonymous treatise published in the Boston Gazette, John Adams, later the second President of the United States, wrote that canon law was a tyrannical form of government, as was feudal law, but that the worst of all forms of governments was a union of the two. [11] And it was Madison who stated that, "In the Papal System, Government and Religion are in a manner consolidated, & that is found to be the worst of Governments."

We respectfully request, therefore, that the Department of Justice not adopt recommendations 1 and 9 of the Committee and that it adopt recommendation 1 of the Committee that it convene a public hearing, with written and oral submissions from the public, to more comprehensively study the question of the separation of church and state in history, and in American history in particular, a study which we would enthusiastically support.

We remain, Yours truly,

Darlene D Castellano

[1] https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/president-trumps-religious-liberty-commission-delivers-historic-report-draft
[2] Ibid, [Emphasis added].
[3] https://www.chron.com/politics/article/dan-patrick-church-state-constitution-viral-22323383.php
[4] https://reclaimthenet.org/pope-francis-calls-on-social-media-platforms-to-censor-more-misinformation;
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAUkMwlWYB8; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMBiPIfx-UA
[6] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html
[7] https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html – Jefferson here is clearly referring to Congress. That Congress is prohibited by the Constitution from making a union of church and state.
[8] James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments
[9] Matthew 22:21
[10] James Madison, Letter to Robert Walsh, March 2, 1819.
[11] John Adams, Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765.
https://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA01dg2

From: Kathleen Reynolds <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Religious Liberty
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 22:03:33 -0400
Importance: Normal

To the religious freedom committee:

The church should never tell the state what to do. There has to be a separation of church and state. If the church and state unites, Christians will face persecution. History proves this. We have a right to worship God or not. This should never be legislated. As much as I would love a Christian nation we cannot enforce our beliefs on others. And what church will legislate and who decides? This would be the problem. It will usher in laws that will cause persecution.

Sincerely,
Kathy Reynolds
Decatur, Il

Sent from my iPhone

From: Richard Boyer <[redacted]>
To: "[redacted]" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – RLC Draft Report – Richard Boyer
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 22:22:36 -0400
Importance: Normal

The June 26, 2026 Religious Liberty Commission Draft Report attempts to reinvent the original concept of religious freedom that was established by Roger Williams, a Puritan minister, in the1640s.

That's when he wrote his classic book on religious freedom, The Bloody Tenent of Persecution. It's also when he obtained a charter to found Rhode Island and the Providence Plantation, which operated as a democratic republic based on the idea of "Soul Liberty."

It was Williams who originated the familiar idea that religious freedom depends on separation of church and state. That enduring tradition, adopted formally by the United States in 1791, has served us well for 234 years. It is no coincidence that the Bill of Rights, and a federal guarantee of religious liberty in particular, were insisted upon by Rhode Island.

Importantly, implementation of our wall of separation has remained consistent with conditions specified by Williams and has produced the outcomes he envisioned (see below).

Motivated by his opposition to political or government influence over religion, Williams not only saw the need for a "hedge or wall of Separation between the Garden of the Church and the Wilderness of the world," he provided context.

Williams elaborated by asserting that:

"All civil states, with their officers of justice, in their respective constitutions and administrations, are proved essentially civil, and therefore not judges, governors, or defenders of the spiritual, or Christian, state and worship." and,

"It is the will and command of God that, since the coming of his Son the Lord Jesus, a permission of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or anti-Christian consciences and worships be granted to all men in all nations and countries"

Rephrased slightly,

1. "Officers of Justice, your job is NOT to defend religion. Hands off." and,
2. "Religious freedom means you can practice any religion or none, and you're even free to be anti-Christian. God says so."

It is regrettable that the RLC Draft Report omits the pre-Jefferson era history of the wall of separation. Neglecting Rhode Island's preceding century-plus experience of religious liberty protected by the wall of separation does the reader a disservice.

On reflection, it's apparent that the Draft Report is at odds with the tradition founded by Williams and enshrined in our Constitution.

Based on the proposed recommendations, it is clear that the Religious Liberty Commission is seeking to use the federal government to apportion religious privilege.

If the Commission finalizes this report, it will not be protecting religious liberty: it will be undermining it.

Turning to Williams again,

"God requireth not an uniformity of religion to be enacted and enforced in any civil state; which enforced uniformity, sooner or later, is the greatest occasion of civil war.. and destruction of millions of souls."

"An enforced uniformity of religion throughout a nation or civil state confounds the civil and religious, denies the principles of Christianity and civility" and,

"The permission of other consciences and worships than a state professeth, only can, according to God, procure a firm and lasting peace... true civility and Christianity may both flourish in a state or kingdom, notwithstanding the permission of diverse and contrary consciences"

History has proved Roger Williams right.

The RLC Draft Report is contrary to established religious liberty protections, and threatens a tradition that has successfully served us for more than three and a half centuries.

I urge the Commission to reject this draft report in its entirety and to disband without further recommendations. Our government must recommit itself to the pluralistic constitutional framework that protects the conscience of every American of all religions and beliefs.

Sincerely,

Richard Boyer

From: Louis Jovanovich <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT – RLC Draft Report
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 23:02:59 -0400
Importance: Normal

To the Department of Justice and the Religious Liberty Commission,

I am writing to submit my formal public comment strongly opposing the recommendations outlined in the Presidential Religious Liberty Commission's draft report.

This dangerous framework seeks to redefine the Establishment Clause and undermine the critical separation of church and state. Allowing publicly funded organizations to use religion as a shield to discriminate in hiring and service provision is a gross violation of civil rights. Furthermore, these recommendations threaten vital healthcare access—including reproductive freedom, miscarriage management, and transgender care—leaving vulnerable communities without safe alternatives. Finally, attempting to dismantle the Johnson Amendment unconstitutionally injects dark political money into tax-exempt religious institutions.

True religious freedom protects personal conscience for all Americans. It must never be weaponized by the federal government to deny others healthcare, shelter, safety, or equal treatment under the law.

I urge the Department of Justice to reject these recommendations and uphold the constitutional rights of all citizens, regardless of their faith or lack thereof.

Sincerely,

Louis Jovanovich

From: [redacted]
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of Church and state
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 23:33:41 -0400
Importance: Normal

To Whom It May Concern,

Religious freedom is one of the foundational principles of the United States. Every person should have the right to practice their faith—or choose not to practice a faith—without government interference or favoritism.

In recent years, debates about religion in public life have often invoked the phrase "separation of church and state." In my view, this principle is sometimes misunderstood or misapplied. Rather than restricting an individual's ability to freely exercise their religious beliefs, its purpose is to prevent the government from establishing, endorsing, or enforcing a particular religion.

Many of America's founders and early settlers came from Europe, where governments often imposed an official religion and persecuted those who held different beliefs. In those systems, the power of the state was used to enforce religious conformity, leaving little room for individual freedom of conscience.

The separation of church and state helps prevent the government from favoring one religion over another or compelling religious practice. This principle protects everyone, regardless of whether they are Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, members of another faith, or have no religious affiliation. It ensures that religious belief remains a matter of personal conviction rather than government mandate.

History shows that when governmental and religious authority become too closely intertwined, religious liberty can be diminished rather than strengthened. Preserving the separation of church and state is one of the ways we safeguard the freedom of religion guaranteed by the First Amendment and the Bill of Rights.

Our nation is strongest when it protects the rights of every individual to live according to their sincerely held beliefs while ensuring that the government remains neutral in matters of religion. By upholding both religious freedom and the separation of church and state, we honor the principles upon which the United States was founded.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

From: yolanda serrano <vegancook2010@gmail.com>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <RLC@usdoj.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of church and state
Date: Thu, 09 Jul 2026 23:37:33 -0400
Importance: Normal

I agree with Pillar of Freedom's response on separation of church and state. Thank you. Yolanda
Sent from my iPhone

From: Jenney Roesener <[redacted]>
To: "RLC (OASG)" <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Separation of church and state
Date: Fri, 10 Jul 2026 00:24:29 -0400
Importance: Normal

I agree with pillar of freedom's comments. Please implement them

Sincerely Jenney Roesener
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone