

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 78

Expressing support for freedom of conscience.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 23, 2019

Mr. BANKS submitted the following joint resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

JOINT RESOLUTION

Expressing support for freedom of conscience.

Whereas the settlement of the 13 colonies was driven in part
by those seeking refuge from government-sponsored religious persecution;

Whereas the Framers of the Constitution of the United States recognized the centrality of freedom of conscience to the establishment of the United States, enshrining in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances”;

Whereas churches, synagogues, mosques, and other religious organizations have played a central and invaluable role in life in the United States; and

Whereas Congress has recognized the importance of religious institutions by enacting a variety of legal protections for those institutions, including exemption from income taxes: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
 2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
 3 That—

4 (1) the protections of freedom of conscience en-
 5 shrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution
 6 of the United States remain central to the experi-
 7 ment of the United States in republican self-govern-
 8 ment under the Constitution of the United States;

9 (2) government should not be in the business of
 10 dictating what “correct” religious beliefs are; and

11 (3) any effort by the government to condition
 12 the receipt of the protections of the Constitution of
 13 the United States and the laws of the United States,
 14 including an exemption from taxation, on the public
 15 policy positions of an organization is an affront to
 16 the spirit and letter of the First Amendment to the
 17 Constitution of the United States.

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