



March 27, 2015

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Federal & State Affairs Committee

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In America, we celebrate the diversity of religious views, which we know as pluralism. I am here today, in support of Senate Bill 175, to say that in the United States, and in Kansas in particular, the legislation being considered affirms the value of a pluralistic view of Religious Liberty. Now I do not worship at the altar of pluralism, however, I understand that if I want to be Christian and have a Christian worldview, I need to also respect other Americans who view the world differently than I.

This seems to be the beauty of what it is to be a religious person in America. We celebrate the right of our neighbors to be Jewish, Muslim, Christian, some other faith, or have no faith at all. We celebrate the right of the Jew to believe and behave as a Jew. Furthermore, we object when laws are established that preclude the right of Americans to believe and behave with religious conviction.

On too many university campuses today, our student ministries are being told that students cannot establish criteria for leadership and select leaders who share their faith. For a faith-based organization, such a rule is devastating. It is common sense that student groups of all kinds—whether religious or not—ought to have the right to select leaders who are in agreement with their organizational mission, values, and practice.

A Christian club on campus at a Kansas university or college ought to be able to select a Christian person as its leader. In the same respect, a Jewish Student Association ought to be able to object to someone who doesn't share the Jewish faith seeking a leadership position in their association.

SB 175 not only protects the religious person in our communities, it also protects the religious person on our campuses. It says we do not want to hinder the free expression and practice of religion in America. It says we will not establish policies and legislation which preclude the free exercise of religious belief, speech, and behavior in the state of Kansas.

At the end of the day the legislation being considered celebrates the diversity of religious views in America and protects them. I wholeheartedly support its adoption.

Curtis L. Cole  
Administrative Director  
Chi Alpha Campus Ministries, U.S.A.

Chi Alpha Campus Ministries was founded in 1953 as the college campus ministry of the General Council of the Assemblies of God. Based in Springfield, Missouri, Chi Alpha serves 31,000 students on 314 campuses nationwide. Kansas chapters include the Kansas University, Kansas State University, and Wichita State University, along with 6 other campuses across the state.

The Assemblies of God is a Pentecostal Christian denomination, which includes 3,127,857 adherents in America and 67,512,302 adherents worldwide. There are 14,495 members attending 140 Assemblies of God churches in Kansas.

