

## House Concurrent Resolution No. 5050

By Representatives Kauffman, Cook, DiVita, Faber, Horst, Howell, Huy, P. Long, Mason, McClure, McLeland, Miller, Jim Morrison, Myers, Novascone, O'Neal, Patterson, Pauls, L. Powell, T. Powell, Powers, Pyle, Toplikar, Vickrey and D. Williams

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION memorializing the Congress of the United States to propose an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to permit voluntary school prayer and other public religious speech.

WHEREAS, Our country was founded on the precepts of freedom, liberty and the right of the people to acknowledge God according to the dictates of their conscience; and

WHEREAS, From the very beginning of our nation to the founding of our first national government in 1774, and from the Continental Congress to the Constitutional Convention and the years after the establishment of our Constitution, voluntary prayer has been a unifying and consoling force; and

WHEREAS, Statements of belief in a supreme power and the virtue of seeking guidance, strength and protection from that power are prevalent throughout our national history and appear in our national documents as well as in virtually every state constitution; and

WHEREAS, The framers of the Constitution, recognizing free exercise of religion as an inalienable right, secured its protection with the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Every session of Congress and of many other legislative and public bodies across the nation begins with the comfort and encouragement of voluntary prayer; and

WHEREAS, Our government has a constitutional obligation to protect religious freedom; and

WHEREAS, One of the purposes of education is to prepare students to be good citizens; and

WHEREAS, Instilling an appreciation and respect not only for the beliefs and traditions of others but also for the longstanding beliefs and traditions of the nation forms a part of good citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Voluntary student prayer formed a part of American public schools from their origination in 1642 and for over three hundred years

1 until the United States Supreme Court, in a 1962 ruling it said was “with-  
2 out precedent,” struck down what it described as “voluntary, nondenom-  
3 inational school prayer”; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1985 the United States Supreme Court even struck  
5 down voluntary, silent student prayers; and

6 WHEREAS, An increasing number of recent religion-hostile court de-  
7 cisions now prohibit the overwhelming majority of Americans from par-  
8 ticipating in the very same religious expressions their parents, grandpar-  
9 ents and generations before them enjoyed; and

10 WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of Americans now favor giving  
11 specific protections to these traditional religious expressions: Now,  
12 therefore,

13 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas,*  
14 *the Senate concurring therein:* That the Kansas Legislature urges the  
15 United States Congress to propose an amendment to the Constitution  
16 reinstating protection for voluntary school prayer and other public relig-  
17 ious speech; and

18 *Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of State provide enrolled  
19 copies of this resolution to the President of the United States Senate, the  
20 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and to each mem-  
21 ber of the Kansas legislative delegation.

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