

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION DESIGNATING RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM DAY**

2015 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Brian S. King

Senate Sponsor: Jim Dabakis

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor designates January 16th each year as "Religious Freedom Day."

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ designates January 16th each year as "Religious Freedom Day" in the state of Utah;

and

- ▶ urges Utah's citizens and governments to remember and honor the nation's first religious freedom law, as written and championed by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, the United States Congress in 1992 set aside January 16th as Religious Freedom Day to honor the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in 1786;

WHEREAS, Religious Freedom Day has been recognized by presidential proclamation annually;

WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was written by Thomas



28 Jefferson one year after writing the Declaration of Independence, and ushered into law by
29 James Madison one year before he became a principal author of the United States Constitution;

30 WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom represents the first and
31 defining law establishing and protecting the rights of individuals to choose for themselves what
32 they will or will not believe;

33 WHEREAS, the right to religious freedom as defined by Jefferson and Madison is
34 fundamental to the success of a democratic republic;

35 WHEREAS, the state of Utah was founded upon the principles of respect for the beliefs
36 of all persons, be they Christian or Jewish, Muslim or Hindu, Buddhist or Sikh, atheist or
37 agnostic;

38 WHEREAS, millions of people from all parts of the world have come to Utah fleeing
39 religious persecution;

40 WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom established that all individuals
41 are free to believe as they will and that this shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their
42 civil capacities;

43 WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States has recognized repeatedly that the
44 Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom right was an important influence in the development of
45 the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights:

46 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
47 Governor concurring therein, designates January 16th each year as "Religious Freedom Day" in
48 the state of Utah.

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge citizens and
50 local governments to remember and honor the nation's first Religious Freedom law, as written
51 and championed by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

52 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the members of
53 Utah's congressional delegation and the state legislatures of the other 49 states.

Legislative Review Note
as of 2-2-15 6:01 PM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel