



Focus on Religious Freedom

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"The happy union of these states is a wonder; their Constitution is a miracle; their example the hope of liberty throughout the world." - James Madison

Celebrating Constitution Week, September 17-23, in All Schools

"The U.S. Constitution stands as a testament to the tenacity of Americans throughout history to maintain their liberties, freedoms and inalienable rights." ⁽¹⁾ In 1956, the Daughters of the American Revolution started the celebration of the Constitution adopted by Congress. Then, in 2004, Sen. Robert Byrd, correctly believing that American school children lacked significant knowledge regarding the Constitution, proposed an amendment, passed by Congress, requiring that all educational institutions receiving federal funds implement educational programs relating to the U.S. Constitution on Sept. 17 every year, celebrating the signing of the Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787.

Since federal law requires schools, colleges and universities to observe Constitution Day with appropriate programs, those schools failing to observe the day or week, risk losing their federal funds.

This Constitution is the world's longest surviving written charter of government with its first 3 words, "We the People", affirming that the government of these United States exists to serve its citizens. "...its framers wisely separated and balanced governmental powers to safeguard the interests of majority rule and minority rights, of liberty and equality, and of the state and federal governments." ⁽²⁾

"To prevent the abuses of power they felt under the British monarchy, the Founding Fathers framed the Constitution carefully, distributing power over three branches of government, outlining its powers, limitations on those powers, and the rights of citizens." ⁽³⁾ The three branches were to have equal powers, called "checks and balances." "Powers not assigned to one of the three branches are left to the individual states." ⁽⁴⁾

Some of the original delegates from the states were troubled that the original Constitution lacked a description of individual rights. In 1791, Americans added the first 10 Amendments known as the Bill of Rights. The first and foundational right is: "**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; ...**" ⁽⁵⁾

(dar.org(1); ciis.edu(2)(5); nationalday.com(3)(4); trinitydc.edu; uscode.house.gov.;
Constitution of the United States

***"Hold on, my friends, to the Constitution and to the Republic for which it stands.
Miracles do not cluster and what has happened once in 6,000 years may not happen again.
Hold on to the Constitution, for if the American Constitution should fail,
there will be anarchy throughout the world." -Daniel Webster, lawyer and statesman (1782-1852)***

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