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## Focus on Religious Freedom

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***"Religion cannot be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life."*** - Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*

### **"Freedom of Religion" vs "Freedom of Worship" - What's the difference?**

"We in the U.S. actually have freedom of religion, not freedom of worship," said Sen. James Lankford. The terms, "freedom of religion" and "freedom of worship" are often used interchangeably, but there is a significant difference in meaning.

Freedom of worship "argues that faith should remain a private affair - relegated to personal activities or worship services," said policy analyst Sarah Torre. "Step outside the four walls of a home or house of worship and robust protection of religious freedom ends."

Freedom of religion is the more expansive term since it includes worship but also the right of believers to evangelize, change their religion, have schools and charitable institutions. "It's about the right to dress according to one's religious dictates, to preach openly, to evangelize, to engage in the public square," said a spokesman for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty. "Everyone knows that religious Jews keep kosher, religious Quakers don't go to war, and religious Muslim women wear headscarves - yet 'freedom of worship' would protect none of these acts of faith."

(nronline.org, 8/18/16; dailysignal.com, 4/30/15; onfaith.com)

***"Religious freedom is one of those unique rights that, to be fully enjoyed, other rights like association and speech must also be protected. Words matter."***

Knox Thames, Pepperdine University, Director of Program on Global Faith and Inclusive Societies