



Focus on Religious Freedom

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1st Amendment and RFRA Protect Religious Freedom for All

(RFRA) Religious Freedom Restoration Act

On Dec. 15, 1791, when the Bill of Rights was added to the U.S. Constitution to further protect the freedoms of individuals, the 1st Amendment's protections of the right to be free from government-imposed religion and the right to freely exercise one's chosen faith were the first of those freedoms. In 1993, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) directing more protection for the free exercise of faith, was introduced by then Rep. Charles Schumer and was unanimously passed by the House. The Senate passed it 97-3 and President Clinton signed the RFRA bill into law.

This extraordinary bipartisan support of religious freedom became the impetus for many states to pass their own RFRA to supplement the Federal RFRA when there was disagreement as to its applicability.

RFRA directed that the government could not "substantially burden" a person's exercise of faith. The only exception is the existence of a compelling governmental issue in a particular situation and if the burden on the person's faith was the least restrictive means possible to satisfy the compelling issue.

From our nation's founding through the bipartisan passage of RFRA, our citizens have been empowered to follow their consciences. As we look for leaders who will support our 1st amendment and RFRA, we can ask candidates of all parties and policy makers:

- What is your policy on abortion and euthanasia? Do you believe doctors should be mandated to perform abortions and trans-gender surgeries? What is your proposed time limit for abortion?
- Although the FACE Act was passed to protect abortion facilities and also pro-life centers and churches, why is the FACE Act invoked against Pro-Life Americans who are routinely arrested, fined and often imprisoned for peaceful demonstrations? Why have there been only a handful of charges filed regarding the 90 pro-life centers vandalized and fire-bombed and the 200 churches vandalized by pro-abortion activists since the Dobbs decision overturned Roe v Wade?
- Do you support the questioning of judicial candidates about their membership in the Knights of Columbus in denial of Article VI of the Constitution forbidding any religious test for public office?
- Do you support the right of parents to educate their children about sexuality?
- Do you favor the repeal of RFRA?
- Do you support targeting of Catholics who attend the Latin Mass as potential terrorists?

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