

HJR 62 -- Religious Freedom in Public Places

Sponsor: McGhee

Upon voter approval, this proposed constitutional amendment guarantees a citizen's First Amendment right to pray and worship in all public areas including schools as long as the activities are voluntary and subject to the same rules and regulations that apply to all other types of speech.

The amendment reaffirms a citizen's right to choose any religion or no religion at all by prohibiting the establishment of an official state religion and the state from coercing any person to participate in any prayer or other religious activity.

Public schools receiving state funds are required to display the text of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States in a conspicuous and legible manner.

The amendment also reaffirms the right of employees and elected officials of the State of Missouri to pray on government premises and public property. The bill ensures the General Assembly and other political subdivisions the right to have ministers and clergymen offer prayers or invocations at meetings or sessions of the General Assembly or other governing bodies.

The amendment does not expand the religious rights of prisoners beyond those guaranteed by existing federal laws.