

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

# HOUSE BILL NO. 2760

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE POCHE.

4547H.01I

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

## AN ACT

To amend chapter 1, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to houses of worship.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Chapter 1, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 1.810, to read as follows:

**1.810. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Protecting Religious Assembly in States of Emergency (PRAISE) Act".**

**2. During states of emergency declared under the provisions of chapter 44 or orders made with the powers granted under section 192.020, neither the state nor any of its political subdivisions shall impose restrictions upon religious places of worship with the intent to make, or the effect of making, religious services impractical. If any entity is exempt from such emergency declarations or orders, religious places of worship shall also be exempt. Emergency declarations and orders shall not prohibit religious services that are held on private property.**

**3. The provisions of subsection 2 of this section shall not apply to emergency evacuation orders involving imminent danger from flooding, fires, tornadoes, earthquakes, terrorist threats, civil unrest, or hazardous material incidents that apply generally to the area where the religious place of worship or the residences of its members are located. Once the imminent danger has passed, religious services shall be allowed to resume.**

**4. If the state or any of its political subdivisions violate this section, the religious place or places of worship affected may bring a civil action for relief in a court of competent jurisdiction. Relief sought may include, but shall not be limited to, injunctive**

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

19 **orders, compensatory damages, nominal damages, declaration of violation, and where**  
20 **malice or recklessness is demonstrated, punitive damages.**

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