

2016 SESSION

LEGISLATION NOT PREPARED BY DLS
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HR75

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 75

Offered January 14, 2016

Commending the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.

Patrons—Toscano, Boysko, Kory, Rasoul and Watts

WHEREAS, statements have recently been made proposing to halt the entry of those of the Islamic faith from entering the United States; and

WHEREAS, these statements ignore the difference between peaceful adherents to a religion and actual fanatics, lumping all Muslims into the category of "potential terrorists"; and

WHEREAS, the United States and other nations have experienced violent attacks by adherents to a violent and corrupted form of radical Islam preached by a variety of discrete sects, each having perverted the teachings of that religion, a faith which has more than a billion peaceful adherents around the globe, including millions of loyal Americans here in the United States; and

WHEREAS, while the United States and the rest of the world must remain committed to defeating forces aligned with this perversion of Islam, no matter who they are or from where they wish to threaten us, we must always keep our focus on our actual enemy, which is not the Islamic faith nor the billion Muslims around the world who wish to simply live and practice their religion in peace; and

WHEREAS, denying Muslims entry into the United States represents a violation of our founding principles that we provide equal protection under the law for every person on American soil—citizen, immigrant and visitor alike—and that we protect the free exercise of whatever faith they profess; and

WHEREAS, Virginians subscribe to Thomas Jefferson's codification of natural law, that "no man shall be . . . enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief, but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of Religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities"; and

WHEREAS, January 16, 2016, marks the 230th anniversary of the codification of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, hereby affirm that:

1. Statements that deny Muslims the ability to enter the United States of America represent a violation of the principles which we as Americans and Virginians have long professed and labored to defend; and

2. Such statements are reckless, inappropriate, and contrary to the founding principles embodied in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom; and

3. We reaffirm our commitment to religious liberty and freedom, and that we commit to the principle that our nation remains open to individuals of all faiths who seek a better life, free from political persecution; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the First Freedom Center as an expression of the House of Delegates' celebration of the anniversary of the codification of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom and reaffirmation of the principles established therein.