

1995 SESSION

HOUSE SUBSTITUTE

LD3727408

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 602 FLOOR AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by Delegate Plum
on February 7, 1995)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Plum)

Expressing the support of the General Assembly for Virginia's Statute for Religious Freedom and for the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, and requesting the Attorney General to take such action as may be necessary to uphold the principles of religious freedom affirmed in these Acts.

WHEREAS, Virginia is the home of the Statute for Religious Freedom, (§ 57-1, Code of Virginia), whose declaration of religious rights the General Assembly has consistently and expressly reaffirmed in §§ 57-2 and 57-2.01 of the Code of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was the model for the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and the expressions of religious freedom in countries throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, in enacting the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, 42 U.S.C. §2000bb et seq., the Congress and the President of the United States reaffirmed that the exercise of religion is an inalienable right that must not be infringed by government action, except when such action is the least restrictive means to achieve a compelling government interest; and

WHEREAS, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA) was supported by one of the largest and most diverse coalitions of religious and civil liberties organizations ever assembled and approved overwhelmingly by Congress in a 97-3 vote in the Senate, and unanimously in the House of Representatives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly reaffirm its support of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, and request that the Attorney General, when arguing the applicability of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, take such action as may be necessary to uphold the principles of religious freedom affirmed in these acts; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Attorney General so that he may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

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