



New Jersey State Council Knights of Columbus

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2021-13

RESOLUTION IN DEFENSE OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

WHEREAS the Catholic Church teaches that the right to religious freedom is based upon the inherent dignity of the human person, which is known through both reason and divine revelation, and

WHEREAS the right to religious freedom is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, and

WHEREAS religious freedom means that all persons are to be free from coercion in matters of belief and conscience, and that no person should be forced to act in a manner contrary to his or her own beliefs or conscience, and

WHEREAS during his visit to the United States in 2008, Pope Benedict XVI and, more recently, Pope Francis reminded us that it should never be necessary to deny God to enjoy our rights and that it is inconceivable that believers should have to suppress their faith to be active citizens, and

WHEREAS the Church consistently teaches that religious freedom is an inalienable right which should be recognized in the governing laws of each country in such a way that it is acknowledged as a basic civil right, and

WHEREAS religious freedom is not a benefit that a government confers out of a sense of mere tolerance that can be removed, but rather it is an inalienable right, rooted in the transcendent dignity of every human being, and

WHEREAS religious freedom is at the very heart of human rights because it encompasses freedom of speech, assembly, and conscience, which together form the basis of civil society and respect for the individual, and

WHEREAS some members of Congress have expressed anti-religious bias.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates of the New Jersey State Council Knights of Columbus, on this 15th day of May 2021, representing the 59,000 New Jersey Knights along with their families, call upon Congress to reintroduce the Conscience Protection Act, pass it, and send it to the President to sign to protect the constitutional right of religious institutions and individuals to be free from government coercion in health care and all other matters, and

Patriots Protecting All God's Children

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we would remain steadfast in our opposition to any **future governmental action** or policy that forces Catholic institutions and individuals to violate our most deeply held moral and religious convictions, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our struggle for religious freedom at this decisive moment in our nation's history is not only for our sake, but for the sake of our children, our grandchildren, and all future generations, so that they too may know a country that is "one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all", and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution is forwarded to the President and members of the New Jersey Congressional delegation.