

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-C026
Title: Religious Liberty
Proposer: Atlanta
Topic: Religious Freedom

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-D066 Advocate for Access to Gender Affirming Care
2018-D050 Encourage Advocacy and Prayer for Victims of Religious Persecution
1988-D024 Support and Pray for Religious Freedom Throughout the World
1985-D069 Affirm Guidelines for Working for Religious Liberty

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2015-C055 Condemn Violence Against Christians and Commit to Prayer
2003-D020 Oppose Legal Systems Which Violate Human Rights
1997-D016 Take Actions to Express Church's Support of Religious Freedom
1994-D015 Reaffirm Support for Human Rights
1991-C069 Support Protection of Religious Freedom of Native Americans

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

C026 - Religious Liberty

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Atlanta

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: HD

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 07 - Social Justice & United States Policy

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church, meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, urge the United States Congress and the state legislatures to refrain from passing laws/legislation that conflict with or interfere with the religious liberty of Episcopalians to practice their faith.

Explanation

We acknowledge that the vows of our Baptismal Covenant to respect the dignity of every human being and to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves, are foundational in our relationships as members of the Body of Christ. And we also acknowledge that the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church prohibit discrimination based on, among other things, sexual orientation and gender, gender identity/expression.

Recent legislation passed by various state legislatures violates the religious liberty of Episcopalians by discriminating against individuals based on their sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression. We are entitled to practice our religious beliefs according to the Constitution of the United States, and in accordance with our own Constitution and Canons. Legislation restricting the rights of parents regarding their transgender children violates those beliefs. Similarly, practicing discrimination against

persons based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression also violates those beliefs.



Resolution Number: 2022-D066
Title: Advocate for Access to Gender Affirming Care
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention celebrates the diversity of human experience, recognizing that we are all made in the image of God; and be it further

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention calls for the Episcopal Church to advocate for access to gender affirming care in all forms (social, medical, or any other) and at all ages as part of our Baptismal call to “respect the dignity of every human being”; and be it further

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention affirms that all Episcopalians should be able to partake in gender affirming care with no restriction on movement, autonomy, or timing; and be it further

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention understands that the protection of religious liberty extends to all Episcopalians who may need or desire to access, to utilize, to aid others in the procurement of, or to offer gender affirming care; and be it further

Resolved, That this 80th General Convention supports public policies at the local, state, and national levels in all our countries to support gender affirming care.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), p. 883.



Resolution Number: 2018-D050
Title: Encourage Advocacy and Prayer for Victims of Religious Persecution
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirm its commitment to the freedom of all people in all places to profess and practice their religious beliefs as a universal human right; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention express its concern that adherents of religious minorities in many nations and cultures are persecuted by religious majorities and by governments hostile to religion through gratuitous criticism, legal strictures, social exclusion, economic discrimination, sanctuary desecration, and physical violence; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage dioceses, congregations and mission organizations to include outreach to persecuted religious minorities in their international mission work; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage dioceses, congregations and mission organizations to establish in their international mission work relationships of solidarity with Christians experiencing persecution by reason of their faith in Jesus Christ; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request congregations to include in the Prayers of the People intercessions for persecuted Christians and other persecuted religious minorities on the second Sunday of each of the following seasons of the Church Year: Advent, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage congregations and dioceses to support reputable organizations that help those who are victims of religious persecution; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Episcopal Church's Office of Governmental Relations to advocate on behalf of legislation and international appeals to protect religious freedom; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention Office communicate this resolution to the United States Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and to the bipartisan United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 369-370.



Resolution Number: 1988-D024
Title: Support and Pray for Religious Freedom Throughout the World
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 69th General Convention of the Episcopal Church urge the dioceses and parishes of this Church to pray for religious freedom in the world throughout the coming triennium; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Council be urged to adopt religious freedom as a public policy and devise ways and means to protest the persecution of all religions ; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention convey to the General Secretary of the United Nations, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and the Secretary of State of the United States its support of the United Nations' work for religious freedom world-wide and urge its continuation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Council be urged to devise ways and means to intercede for individuals and groups suffering persecution wherever the Church is serving; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Council be urged to publicize in the dioceses and parishes of the Church material on religious liberty approved by the Executive Council.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 224.



Resolution Number: 1985-D069
Title: Affirm Guidelines for Working for Religious Liberty
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 68th General Convention affirm its support for religious freedom for all persons by speaking out on behalf of and supporting through advocacy, intercession and prayer all persons deprived or threatened with the loss of their religious liberty; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention affirm the following guidelines in working on behalf of religious liberty and commend them to the ecumenical groups in which the Episcopal Church participates:

We will affirm religious freedom as a goal to be sought in all societies, regardless of their political creeds.

We will encourage forms of governance that guarantee freedom of association, speech, and self-determination, believing them to be the most supportive environment for religious independence and tolerance for all.

We will advocate such other support to the persecuted and their families as is deemed appropriate in order that they may know our concern, love and prayerful support.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 264.