

Opposition Testimony Against HCR 3020

Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

I am strongly opposed to House Concurrent Resolution 3020, which urges the State of North Dakota to acknowledge the Kingship of Jesus Christ. While I respect the right of every individual to practice their faith freely, this resolution directly contradicts the fundamental principles of religious freedom enshrined in the United States Constitution and the North Dakota Constitution.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution explicitly states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Similarly, Article I, Section 3 of the North Dakota Constitution affirms that "the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall be forever guaranteed in this state." By urging the state to acknowledge the Kingship of Jesus Christ, this resolution places governmental endorsement on a specific religious belief, thereby violating these core constitutional protections.

Religious freedom does not mean the government should favor one religion over another; it means that all individuals have the right to choose their beliefs—or to choose no religion at all—without government interference. HCR 3020 not only threatens this right but also raises critical questions: If the state acknowledges the Kingship of Jesus Christ, does it also plan to recognize all other religious beliefs equally? Will North Dakota officially recognize Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Paganism, or Satanism? What about those who do not believe in any religion at all? If the state is to be fair and just, then it must either recognize all religious beliefs equally or none at all.

Furthermore, what authority does the state legislature have to dictate the religious beliefs of every resident of North Dakota? Government should serve all its people, not just those who adhere to a particular faith. To endorse one religion through government action is to exclude and alienate those who do not share that faith, fostering division rather than unity among North Dakota's diverse citizens.

Legislators take an oath to uphold the Constitution, and HCR 3020 runs counter to that oath. This resolution sets a dangerous precedent that undermines the religious freedoms of North Dakotans and opens the door for future government overreach into matters of personal faith.

I urge you to reject HCR 3020 and stand for the principles of religious liberty and government neutrality in matters of faith. Our Constitution protects all people—believers and non-believers alike. Let us not erode these protections by endorsing one religious doctrine over all others.

Thank you for your time and consideration.