

As Introduced

**130th General Assembly
Regular Session
2013-2014**

H. R. No. 283

Representative Young

**Cosponsors: Representatives Adams, J., Beck, Becker, Buchy, Derickson,
Hood, Thompson**

RESOLUTION

To urge the United States Congress and the United 1
States Department of Defense to protect and uphold 2
the religious and free speech rights of military 3
service members. 4

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE
OF OHIO:**

WHEREAS, In contrast to civilian society, the military 5
operates under a unique set of rules in order to maintain 6
discipline, to ensure unit cohesion, and to achieve military 7
objectives; and 8

WHEREAS, Given the nature of the conflicts in which the 9
United States currently is engaged, it is important for the 10
military to refrain from appearing to give preference to the 11
practitioners of any particular religion; and 12

WHEREAS, The United States armed forces nonetheless must 13
respect the constitutionally guaranteed religious and free speech 14
rights of those who serve in the military, as those individuals 15
frequently are isolated from their religious communities and lack 16
opportunities for extended personal religious exercise; and 17

WHEREAS, Officers of the United States Military are sworn to 18

support and defend the Constitution of the United States; and 19

WHEREAS, Participation in religious services offered by the 20
military is voluntary, and those who choose not to attend are not 21
punished; and 22

WHEREAS, Recent egregious events give reasons for concern 23
that Christianity has been unfairly targeted within the military, 24
as demonstrated in the following examples: 25

(1) In 2012, a United States Army Reserve equal opportunity 26
training brief expressly listed Catholicism and Evangelical 27
Christianity as examples of religious extremism alongside such 28
groups as Al Qaeda, Hamas, and the KKK; 29

(2) The United States Military Academy's Combating Terrorism 30
Center released a study linking pro-lifers to terrorism; 31

(3) The Bible has been purged from Air Force Inn checklists; 32

(4) President Obama issued a signing statement with the 33
National Defense Authorization Act in which the President implied 34
that some views are more important to be protected than the moral 35
conscience of Christians in the military; 36

(5) The Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office removed a 37
reference to God in its logo on its official patch; 38

(6) At the national cemetery in Houston, Texas, Christian 39
prayers were prohibited at funeral services for military veterans; 40

(7) Distribution of Bibles was banned at Walter Reed Army 41
Medical Center; and 42

(8) Catholic chaplains were prohibited from reading a letter 43
to parishioners from their archbishop regarding the Department of 44
Health and Human Services contraception mandate; and 45

WHEREAS, The military should not penalize or prevent one 46
military member's religious expression simply because it offends 47
another military service member who is equally entitled to the 48

free exercise of religion; now therefore be it 49

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Ohio House of 50
Representatives, urge the United States Department of Defense to 51
utilize calm and prudent judgment in balancing the religious and 52
free speech rights of military service members against the need to 53
preserve military effectiveness; and be it further 54

RESOLVED, That we urge the United States Congress to take 55
action to protect and uphold the religious freedom of military 56
service members as stated in the United States Constitution and 57
the United States Department of Defense Handbook; and be it 58
further 59

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives 60
transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the 61
Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of 62
Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United 63
States Senate, the members of the Ohio Congressional delegation, 64
the United States Secretary of Defense, and the news media of 65
Ohio. 66