

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION DESIGNATING RELIGIOUS**
2 **FREEDOM DAY**

3 2015 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Brian S. King**

6 Senate Sponsor: Jim Dabakis

8 **LONG TITLE**

9 **General Description:**

10 This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor designates January 16th
11 each year as "Religious Freedom Day."

12 **Highlighted Provisions:**

13 This resolution:

14 ▶ designates January 16th each year as "Religious Freedom Day" in the state of Utah;

15 and

16 ▶ urges Utah's citizens and governments to remember and honor the nation's first
17 religious freedom law, as written and championed by Thomas Jefferson and James
18 Madison.

19 **Special Clauses:**

20 None

22 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

23 WHEREAS, the United States Congress in 1992 set aside January 16th as Religious
24 Freedom Day to honor the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in 1786;

25 WHEREAS, Religious Freedom Day has been recognized by presidential proclamation
26 annually;

27 WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was written by Thomas
28 Jefferson one year after writing the Declaration of Independence, and ushered into law by
29 James Madison one year before he became a principal author of the United States Constitution;

30 WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom represents the first and
31 defining law establishing and protecting the rights of individuals to choose for themselves what
32 they will or will not believe;

33 WHEREAS, the right to religious freedom as defined by Jefferson and Madison is
34 fundamental to the success of a constitutional republic;

35 WHEREAS, the state of Utah was founded upon the principles of respect for the
36 religious beliefs or non-beliefs of all persons, and the state constitution expressly provides
37 since statehood in 1896 that "perfect toleration of religious sentiment is guaranteed" (Article
38 III) and all citizens of this state shall enjoy equally all religious rights and privileges (Article
39 IV);

40 WHEREAS, people from all parts of the world have come to the United States of
41 America and Utah fleeing religious persecution;

42 WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom established that all individuals
43 are free to believe as they will and that this shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their
44 civil capacities;

45 WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States has recognized repeatedly that the
46 Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom right was an important influence in the development of
47 the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights:

48 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
49 Governor concurring therein, designates January 16th each year as "Religious Freedom Day" in
50 the state of Utah.

51 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge citizens and
52 local governments to remember and honor the nation's first Religious Freedom law, as written
53 and championed by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, and the enduring religious freedom
54 guaranteed in the United States and Utah constitutions.

55 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the members of
56 Utah's congressional delegation and the state legislatures of the other 49 states.