

H. Res. 494

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

June 27, 2000.

Whereas the official motto of the State of Ohio—“With God All Things Are Possible”—has been the State motto for 41 years, since October 1, 1959;

Whereas the motto is a powerful expression of hope and humility for all the people of Ohio;

Whereas the motto does not establish, promote, endorse, advance, or discriminate against any specific set of religious beliefs;

Whereas the motto is consistent with the American tradition of seeking spiritual guidance in matters of public affairs;

Whereas faith in God was a founding principle of the Nation and the State of Ohio;

Whereas the motto helps promote positive values and citizenship in the youth of Ohio;

Whereas several States or territories and the United States have mottoes or seals making explicit reference to God or Providence;

Whereas the Declaration of Independence and the constitutions or preambles of 45 States make explicit reference to a divine power;

Whereas since 1864, United States coins have borne the motto “In God We Trust”, which Congress made mandatory on all gold and silver coins in 1908 (35 Stat. 164, ch. 173) and on all United States coins and currency in 1955 (69 Stat. 290, ch. 303);

Whereas in 1956, Congress declared the national motto of the United States to be “In God we trust” (70 Stat. 732, ch. 795); and

Whereas Members of Congress take an oath to uphold the Constitution and vigilantly do so in the performance of their legislative duties: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(A) the Ohio State motto and other long-standing mottoes which make reference to God or Providence do so as long-accepted expressions consistent with American tradition and rooted in the sentiments of the American people;

(B) such mottoes are “those references to God that we accept in ceremonial phrases or in other contexts that assure neutrality”, *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668, 717 (1984) (Brennan, J., dissenting), and State and Federal courts should uphold them as such; and

(C) the decision of a three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Cir-

cuit striking down the Ohio State motto is a misinterpretation and misapplication of the United States Constitution; and

(2) the House of Representatives—

(A) finds repugnant all misinterpretations and misapplications of the Constitution by Federal courts which disregard those references to God which are well within the American tradition and within the Constitution;

(B) supports the decision of the Governor and the Attorney General of the State of Ohio to appeal the ruling; and

(C) affirms its support for the Ohio State motto and other State mottoes making reference to a divine power.

Attest:

Clerk.