

Resolution 11, a concurrent resolution recognizing the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the first nutrition program for the elderly under the Older Americans Act of 1965.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 13—REGARDING A DISPLAY OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mr. SHELBY) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs:

S. CON. RES. 13

Whereas Judge Roy S. Moore, a lifelong resident of Etowah County, Alabama, graduate of the United States Military Academy with distinguished service to his country in Vietnam, and graduate of the University of Alabama School of Law, has served his country and his community with uncommon distinction;

Whereas another circuit judge in Alabama, has ordered Judge Moore to remove a copy of the Ten Commandments posted in his courtroom and the Alabama Supreme Court has granted a stay to review the matter;

Whereas the Ten Commandments have had a significant impact on the development of the fundamental legal principles of Western Civilization; and

Whereas the Ten Commandments set forth a code of moral conduct, observance of which is universally acknowledged to promote respect for our system of laws and the good of society: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—*

(1) the Ten Commandments are a declaration of fundamental principles that are the cornerstones of a fair and just society; and

(2) the public display, including display in government offices and courthouses, of the Ten Commandments should be permitted.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise to send a resolution to the desk on behalf of myself and my home state colleague Senator SHELBY.

Mr. President, this concurrent resolution we are introducing today expresses the sense of the Congress that the display of the Ten Commandments in government offices and courthouses should be permitted. This resolution is identical to House Concurrent Resolution 31, sponsored by my good friend, Representative ADERHOLT, which passed the House of Representatives on March 5, 295 to 125.

The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion. This resolution does not endorse any one religion but, rather, states that a religious symbol which has deep-rooted significance for our Nation and its history should not be excluded from public display.

Mr. President, the Founders wisely realized that in a free society, it is imperative that individuals practice forbearance, respect, and temperance. These are the very values taught by all the world's major religions. The Founders devised a Constitution that depended on religion serving as a civilizing force in societal life. John Adams, our second President, and one of the intellectual forces behind the formation of our Nation, said that "our Constitu-

tion was designed for a moral and religious people only. It is wholly inadequate to any other."

But strangely today, there are those who seem determined to drive all trace of religion from the public sphere. They ignore the religious traditions on which this great Nation was founded and work to drive religion and religious people out of public life.

Many of my colleagues are aware Judge Roy Moore, circuit court judge in Gadsden, AL, has been ordered to take down a two-plaque replica of the Ten Commandments displayed in his courtroom.

The irrationality of the action is highlighted by the fact that the judge's display is consistent with other displays involving religious symbols and art in our public property. In fact, a door to the U.S. Supreme Court bears two tablets numbered one to ten, which we interpret to represent the Ten Commandments. And yet a judge in a small Alabama town cannot hang a simple display of the Ten Commandments on the wall without being sued?

Mr. President, this resolution is not just about Judge Moore and it is not just about the display of the Ten Commandments in Gadsden, AL. This resolution provides a good opportunity to discuss this curious governmental hostility towards the display of these plaques that are important to our law, our Nation, and our culture.

The Ten Commandments represent a key part of the foundation of western civilization of our legal system in America. To exclude a display of the Ten Commandments because it suggests an establishment of religion is not consistent with our national history, let alone common sense itself. This Nation was founded on religious traditions that are an integral part of the fabric of American cultural, political, and societal life.

Mr. President, it is time for common sense. No member of this body, on either side of the aisle, should oppose the simple display of documents that are important to our law, to our Nation, and to our culture.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to express support for Judge Roy S. Moore. Judge Moore is a judge on the circuit court of the State of Alabama. Judge Moore is a lifelong resident of Etowah County, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, a distinguished veteran of the Vietnam War, and a graduate of the University of Alabama School of Law. Judge Moore has always and continues to serve his community, Alabama, and this country with distinction and principle.

It is because of his principles that Judge Moore has become an issue. Two years ago, Judge Moore was sued by the Alabama chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union because he opened his court with a prayer and because he displayed the Ten Commandments over his bench. A lower court judge enjoined Judge Moore from pray-

ing before court sessions and later barred his display of the Ten Commandments. The Supreme Court of Alabama has since issued a stay of the order barring display of the Ten Commandments.

Judge Moore has refused to acknowledge the orders which stop him from praying and displaying the Ten Commandments. I support Judge Moore in his actions. I do not believe that his convocation prayer or the presence of the Ten Commandments in the courtroom violates the Constitution.

As the Members of this body well know, a prayer, said from the floor of this Chamber, begins every day in which the Senate is in session. This practice is also followed in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, the Marshal of the Supreme Court, in calling each session to order, implores "God {to} save the United States and this honorable court." It has also become a tradition for Presidents to conclude their State of the Union Addresses with the simple prayer, "God Bless America." I believe these are just a few of the many instances where the Lord is invoked during civil ceremonies and occasions. I believe that these examples are entirely appropriate and in line with the provisions of the Constitution. I feel that our history teaches that the Founding Fathers were against government making efforts to promote specific religions at the expense of others. I do not think it was ever the view of the Founders that the government should adopt a position of Godless neutrality. It is constitutional, it is traditionally appropriate and it is just simply right for our leaders to request the assistance of God in their daily deliberations.

I believe that Judge Moore is also correct in refusing to remove the Ten Commandments from his courtroom. The Judge's display is consistent with other displays involving religious symbols and art in or on public property. In fact, a door to the Supreme Court of the United States bears two tablets numbered one to ten, which I interpret to represent the Ten Commandments. Moreover, there are friezes within the Supreme Court which depict Moses, King Solomon, Confucius, Mohammed, St. Louis and a figure called "Divine Inspiration." I believe that these symbolic representations, just like Judge Moore's, are appropriately placed within our public spaces. Their very presence provides guidance and inspiration for our Nation's leaders.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED

DECENNIAL CENSUS CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ABRAHAM AMENDMENT NO. 24

(Ordered referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.)

Mr. ABRAHAM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him