

bill to get to the floor for a debate. We will see what might happen when this bill might come forward.

Let me take 5 or 6 more minutes and then I will close. There is a professor at Purdue University named Dr. James Davidson. I had read a report. He is well known. He is a psychologist at Purdue University. I talked to Dr. Davidson yesterday. He has spent a lot of time writing books and articles about churches and religion in America. I want to read this to Members. This is the beginning of his research on the issue of the freedom of churches to talk about political issues. "The ban on electioneering has nothing to do with the first amendment or Jefferson's principle of separation of church and state. The first amendment speaks of religious freedom. It says nothing that would preclude churches from aligning themselves with or against a candidate for political office," and he cites certain court rulings. I will not recite those because of time.

"The courts also have never used Thomas Jefferson's celebrated 1802 metaphor about a wall of separation between church and state to stifle church's support or opposition to a political candidate."

Another paragraph, "From a Constitutional perspective then, American churches have had every right to endorse or oppose political candidates. They have not participated in all elections, but they have been actively involved in some. For example, many Protestant churches and church leaders delivered sermons and published religious literature opposing Al Smith's bid to become the Nation's first Catholic President in 1928."

□ 2015

He cites some references there. Constitutional principles have not changed since 1928. Churches still have a constitutional right to endorse or oppose political candidates. However, then he gets into the issue of the Johnson amendment. What he is saying, that up until the Johnson amendment, there were no restrictions of speech, right or wrong. The preacher, the priest, the rabbi, the cleric had every right to talk about issues they thought were important to their church, to their State and to this Nation.

I just wanted to read that because this man, Dr. Davidson, is an expert on this issue. I wanted to cite that for the record tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take just a couple of more minutes now to say that the left has tried to say that if my bill or the bill of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CRANE) passed, then you are allowing the churches to get into the fund-raising business for political candidates. That is total hogwash. The bill that the Congress and the Senate passed, the 2002 campaign finance reform laws, says that if you are a non-profit entity, which is a 501(c)(3), you cannot raise hard or soft money. So that is just a bogus argument from the

extreme left that does not want to have the preachers to have the right to talk about these issues in their churches, synagogues and mosques.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the staff and you for giving me this time. I want to say that the strength of America depends, quite frankly, on our spiritual leaders being able to talk about the issues of the day, whether they be moral issues or political issues. I believe that the strength of this country is dependent on the fact that our spiritual leaders have total freedom of speech no matter what the issue might be. That is the best hope for this country. The spiritual leaders that I have met in the last year and a half I really believe are my brothers in Christ and I have great respect for them.

I want to say that this legislation is supported by such people as D. James Kennedy, Dr. Tim LaHaye and his wife Beverly, by also Ray Flynn, the former Ambassador to the Vatican and also Rabbi Daniel Lapin, a wonderful man of God from the west coast. I talked to him two or three times on this issue. Again, these spiritual leaders and I would say that probably the majority of the spiritual leaders maybe would not even want to discuss these issues in front of their congregation. Maybe they would choose to say, well, I don't want to talk about a political candidate here or there. But my point is, they should have the right to make that decision. They now do not have that right.

There is one other problem with this law. The IRS admitted during the hearing that they cannot enforce this law. As I said earlier, they are dependent on a third party, a spy, if you will, to turn somebody in. I do not believe that that is what this great Nation stands for. Let me also say that they acknowledge that they cannot enforce this law adequately across the board. They have and they did admit they have been somewhat selective as to certain churches. I gave you an example of Floyd Flake who again is a wonderful man of our Lord in New York. All he did was to say to his congregation that he believes that Al Gore is the right man to lead this Nation. Then again I want to go back to the priest down in my district, there was a request made by a parishioner, Just say that George Bush is pro-life. These are just simple words. They have a right to say it. They should have that right. That is acknowledged by Davidson and even in Barry Lynn's letter, the first sentence. He is exactly right. They do have that right. Johnson took it away from them.

I also want to say that this country, I think, is a Nation, and some people will not agree with this, but it was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. That is the foundation of America and if America is going to remain strong, then we have got to be sure that our spiritual leaders have the freedom to talk about the biblical, the moral, and the political issues of the day. They must have that right.

Mr. Speaker, I always close when I come to the floor in a certain way. I spoke this morning and I close this way everywhere I go, because I think we are so fortunate to have our men and women in uniform who are protecting our national security and also protecting the first amendment, the second amendment and all the guarantees that we have in the Constitution. I close this way by saying, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform, I ask God to please bless the men and women who serve in the United States House and the United States Senate, I ask God to please bless the President of the United States so that he might make the right decisions for this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I close this way by saying three times, I ask God: Please God, please God, please God, continue to bless America.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GREEN of Texas (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today after 6:30 p.m. on account of business in the district.

Mrs. THURMAN (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of a birth in the family.

Mr. THOMPSON of California (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for September 25 after 4:00 p.m. and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Mr. ENGLISH (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today until noon on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

The following Members (at the request of Mr. KUCINICH) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. Trandahl, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly an enrolled bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 640. An act to adjust the boundaries of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.