

Policies and Announcements

Church Supports Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993

Supporters of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act held a news conference in Washington, D.C., to announce the introduction in the U.S. Congress of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The Church is a member of the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion, which encouraged introduction of the legislation.

Representing the Church at the news conference was T. LaMar Sleight, president of the Oakton Virginia Stake. He read the following statement at the news conference:

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints supports the principles expressed in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 and urges its passage. We commend the sponsors of this legislation for their recognition of the importance of the free exercise of religion to the freedom and well-being of our pluralistic society. Although we would prefer that the Supreme Court reverse the Smith case and restore the full constitutional dimensions of the First Amendment protection of freedom of religion, we believe that this statutory restoration of the ‘compelling governmental interest’ standard is both a legitimate and a necessary response by the legislative branch to the degradation of religious freedom resulting from the Smith case. For Mormons, this legislation implements into federal law a vital principle of general application embodied in our Church’s eleventh Article of Faith, written in 1842: ‘We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.’”