**KEEP FAITH IN AMERICA**

**State Capitol – [Location]**

**January 16, 2017
[Time]**

**JANUARY 16 Keep Faith in America Events Nationwide and on Facebook Live**

Nationwide gathering of federal and state elected leaders joining together at capitols in a concert of events/press conferences advancing a united message around faith, freedom, civility, and prayer. The events will be held throughout the day, and taking on a variety of forms based on the locality.

**The Keep Faith in America Event/Press Conference can take on a variety of forms. Ideally each event/press conference will include:**

* Location at the capitol
* 15-45 minute event, length is at discretion of legislators
* Bi-partisan, ethnically diverse group of legislators who will stand together around the uniting message of civility, faith, religious freedom, and prayer.
* Invited guests (as many as can be assembled)
* Press coverage
* All of the elements in the following agenda are designed to give you options including the number of legislators involved, signing of the Pledge and length of the event

**PROGRAM AGENDA AND SCRIPT**

**PROGRAM AGENDA**

Welcome Legislator 1

Opening Prayer Legislator 2

Pledge of Allegiance Legislator 3

Patriotic Song Singer

Remarks Legislator 4

Remarks Legislator 5

Read the Pledge/Proclamation/Resolution Legislator 1

Sign Pledge ALL

Closing Comments Legislator 1

**You will be participating in the nationwide FACEBOOK LIVE event that will connect all capitol events and broadcast to millions of viewers at facebook /Keep Faith In America.**

**If you hold an event PRIOR to January 16th and PRE-TAPE your event:**

* Send the video footage via Dropbox to Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation to be inserted into the Facebook Live event
* [Click Here To Send Us Your Video](https://www.dropbox.com/request/0X3JqJJArCmmZXE6F1uq)

**If you hold your event on January 16th, a designated ‘reporter’ will film the event to be included in the Facebook Live event.**

 **PROGRAM SCRIPT**

**ACTION: Legislator steps to podium to begin ceremony,**

LEGISLATOR 1

Good morning and welcome. I am [ ], one of the co-chairs of the [STATE] Legislative Prayer Caucus. We begin this morning as we begin each session of the Senate and the House...with a prayer.

Our opening prayer will be offered by one of the members of the [STATE] Legislative Prayer Caucus, please welcome LEGISLATOR 2…

**ACTION Legislator 2 steps to the podium.**

LEGISLATOR 2

Please bow your heads...

**ACTION: Legislator 1 returns to mic.**

LEGISLATOR 1

Thank you LEGISLATOR 2. Now I will call LEGISLATOR 3 to lead us in the pledge of allegiance.

**ACTION: Legislator 3 steps to the podium.**

LEGISLATOR 3

Leads out with Pledge to American Flag…

**ACTION: Legislator 1 returns to podium.**

LEGISLATOR 1

Thank you LEGISLATOR 3. Now I would like to invite SINGER to lead us in a song that is familiar to many of us.

**ACTION Singer steps to the podium and leads in National Anthem, God Bless America or similar song.**

**ACTION Legislator 1 returns to podium**

LEGISLATOR 1

Thank you SINGER.

**LEGISLATOR 1 describes the purpose of the gathering. [The following can be used as is, revised or replaced as desired]:**We are part of a bipartisan and bicameral nationwide network of lawmakers that includes members of the United States Congress to legislators in almost all 50 states. Today, on Religious Freedom Day, we are standing together with a unified message that we need to keep faith in America, pray for America and our leaders, and promote unconditional civility.

[OPTIONAL INTRODUCTION OF ADDITIONAL VIP GUESTS]
We would like to take a moment and introduce some of the other special guests that are here with us today. We are joined this morning by NAME TOP OFFICIALS (Gov, Lt. Gov, or other)
 *[OPTIONAL REMARKS IF ALSO ANNOUNCING FORMATION OF NEW PRAYER CAUCUS]*

*Today, we are formally announcing the launch of the [STATE] Legislative Prayer Caucus. We are honored and privileged to work alongside so many other members of Congress and state legislators who are committed to protecting prayer in our nation. [STATE] has a long history of defending religious liberty and recognizing the vital role of prayer and faith in the founding

of our country. I thank the members of the [STATE] General Assembly for standing with us by forming the [STATE] Legislative Prayer Caucus and for signing the Call To Prayer Proclamation. In doing so, they are reaffirming the rich spiritual heritage of our nation and protecting the right to pray; not just for this generation, but for all generations to follow.*

I would like to now invite LEGISLATOR 4 to offer some remarks.

**ACTION: LEGISLATOR 4 steps to podium.**

LEGISLATOR 4:

LEGISLATOR 4 offers brief remarks *(SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS BELOW)*

**ACTION: LEGISLATOR 1 returns to podium.**

LEGISLATOR 1:

Thank you LEGISATOR 4. Now I would like to invite LEGISLATOR 5 to share some thoughts.

**ACTION Legislator 5 steps to podium.**

LEGISLATOR 5:

Legislator 5 offers brief remarks. *(SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS BELOW)*

[CONTINUE WITH AS MANY LEGISLATORS/ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT WHO DESIRE TO GIVE REMARKS]

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**VARIOUS OPTIONS FOR NEXT SECTION –**

**READ AND/OR SIGN PLEDGE OR CALL TO PRAYER PROCLAMATION/PLEDGE OR** **RESOLUTION OR PROCLAMATION**

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 **ACTION: Legislator 1 returns to podium.**

LEGISLATOR 1:

I would like to read the **PLEDGE OR CALL TO PRAYER PROCLAMATION/PLEDGE OR** **RESOLUTION OR PROCLAMATION**

**READ**

**Now I would like to invite the legislators to come and sign the PLEDGE OR CALL TO PRAYER PROCLAMATION/PLEDGE

ACTION: As each state leader comes to sign the Pledge, they first stop at the podium to announce his/her name, then proceeds to signing table.**

**ACTION: Photographer snaps a photo of each legislator as they are signing—no posing needed. (Optional)**

**ACTION Legislator 1 steps to the podium after all have signed.**

Thank you for joining us today. Give Final Remarks. Close in Prayer.

Please bow your heads...

**TALKING POINTS**

**As you prepare your remarks remember…**

1. Stories are the most important. People remember and are moved to action when they hear a story that touches them emotionally. Facts and statistics can also be persuasive when given in moderation and support a story.
2. Most people are unaware of the widespread attack on Christians, religious freedom and the increasing hostility to people living out their faith in their public lives. (Tell a story of business owners who are losing their businesses, military personnel being court martialed, Christian schools being told they can’t pray at football games, citizens threatened with arrest for reading the Bible on public sidewalks, etc.)
3. Be positive and bold. Talk about the possibilities for our future and not just the past.
4. The goal of the January 16th events is to accelerate a national conversation around the importance of ensuring that Faith, God, Prayer, the Bible and its teachings, continue to have a place in shaping America’s future, to promote freedom, civility and to reduce animosity.
5. Make it personal. Sometimes just saying you stand for something is powerful. “Today I want to make clear that ‘I Stand For Faith’, and I invite you to stand with me.”
6. Make this professional, not “church-like.”
7. The first step is to stand - stand for our faith. The second step is to pray - pray for our country. The third step is to move - move the mountains that challenge our nation. Let’s set America on a course that positions us well for the future that is ours.

Key Messages for Public Speeches

* The **“Defense Of Faith”** in America is everyone’s responsibility.
	+ Faith and Freedom may not have been born together but their union built the foundations of America and separating the two today would be the demise of America
	+ Faith has a positive impact in inspiring civility and reducing animosity
	+ Faith played a key role in the freedoms defined in our founding documents
	+ When you unravel the thread of faith in America, you unravel the thread of freedom. When you protect the fabric of faith, you protect the fabric of freedom.
* We must **“Keep Faith In America.”**
	+ America is important to the world and America is defined by Freedom.
	+ Hatred is freedom’s worst enemy.
	+ Civility is more powerful than hatred.
	+ Faith is the most effective source of civility.
	+ There is a direct correlation between the reduction in the role of faith and the rise in the energy of hatred.
* We must **“Pray for our Leaders and Nation.”**
	+ Pray for our leaders, to maintain their faith, initiate efforts for restoring civility and reducing animosity, and to support and protect religious freedom.
	+ Pray for our country and ask for God’s continued grace, protection, guidance, and favor upon this nation

Additional Key Messages About National Religious Freedom Day – January 16

* We proudly look back in history to the passage of the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom by Thomas Jefferson, on January 16, 1786, recognizing and affirming Religious Freedom Day to commemorate that great historical accomplishment that provided the heart of our First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
* Thomas Jefferson, pointedly reminds us "God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?
* In America today, the growing ignorance of our rich religious heritage of freedom and the rising intolerance specifically to the free exercise of religion and freedom of speech have been directly accompanied by increasing hatred and a coarsening of civil discourse.

Additional Key Messages for talking to Christians

* **Stand. Pray. Move.**
	+ Pray continuously.
	+ Stand for Faith in your sphere of influence.
	+ Move forward pro-actively to ensure faith will remain the guiding influence in our nation and to tackle the nation’s challenges.
* Christians must embrace tomorrow and help shape our future and not live in fear of it. This is what we are called to do.
* Christians cannot afford to sit this one out. These are spiritual, political and cultural battles.
* We must be willing to embrace this challenge, not hide from it. We must be relevant. If we believe faith is the answer for the world, we must live and act as if it is.

Additional Key Messages for describing the Keep Faith In America Movement

* The anti-faith movement is increasing their hostility and efforts, taking our nation in the wrong direction. We have been given a reprieve and have a window of opportunity right now to change that.
* There is a unique coalition that has formed to initiate a national movement called “Keep Faith In America,” and we want you to join the movement.
	+ In January, elected officials across America are taking a united stand to “Keep Faith In America.” Be part of the Kick-off on January 16th.
	+ In February, we are encouraging Pastors to encourage Christians to pray for our nation and take a stand for faith in their communities.
	+ In March, we are equipping faith–based groups on university campuses to discuss how faith is tied to freedom, and the role of faith in more civility. We are challenging students to take this message across social media to their peers.
	+ In April, we will focus on equipping businesses, school boards and city councils to stand for faith.
	+ Small groups will be established around the country that will meet regularly to pray for the country, and ask the question “How Can I stand for Faith this week?”
* Go to KeepFaithInAmerica.com and get involved. (coming end of December)