

# State of Tennessee



## Senate

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February 7, 2018

Bradley County School Board  
800 South Lee Highway  
Cleveland, TN 37311

RE: Freedom From Religion Foundation

To Whom It May Concern:

Recently, Bradley County High School came under fire by the Freedom From Religion Foundation for a public prayer delivered by a student before an October 13<sup>th</sup> football game. The student's short prayer simply said, "Dear Lord, Thank you for getting everyone here safe tonight."

The Freedom From Religion officials call the prayer a constitutional violation citing the Supreme Court Ruling in 2000 that said it was not permissible to pray over loudspeakers at public school events. The group is threatening legal action and is asking the school officials to respond.

Fortunately, the Tennessee legislature has had the foresight to create The Religious Antidiscrimination Act. According to TCA Part 18 entitled: Religious Viewpoints Antidiscrimination Act- Students do have the right to initiate prayer. TCA.49-6-2904 under Rights of Students states in Section A, that a student shall have the right to carry out an activity described in any of the subdivisions. Section B #1 states: A student shall be permitted to voluntarily pray in a public school, vocally or silently alone, or with other students. The student was definitely on the public school campus and the prayer was done decently and in order.

Also, Section #5 of the TCA. 49-6-2902 states that Neutrality to religion does not require hostility to religion. In (b)part of that same section it states that the purpose of this part is to create a safe harbor for students desiring to avoid litigation and to allow the free speech and religious liberty rights of students to the extent permissible under the establishment clause.

It is time we remember that our cherished Constitution and laws protect the rights of students to live out their faith on school campus. Religious Freedom was very important

to the Founding Fathers as they listed it first in the Bill of Rights. As Americans we must continue to preserve students' constitutionally protected religious rights. With this in mind, not every complaint has standing to create an acknowledgement or investigation on our part.

We the undersigned of the Tennessee Legislative Prayer Caucus stand in support of your decision to exercise your right for Religious Freedom here in Tennessee.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely,



Chairman of Tennessee  
Legislative Prayer Caucus



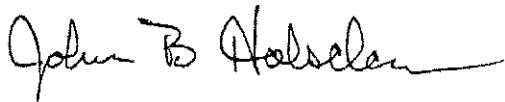
Representative Courtney Rogers



Representative Kent Calfee



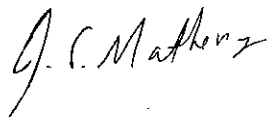
Representative Kevin Brooks



Representative John Holsclaw



Representative Steve McDaniel



Representative Judd Matheny



Senator Janice Bowling



Representative Jerry Sexton



Senator Delores Gresham



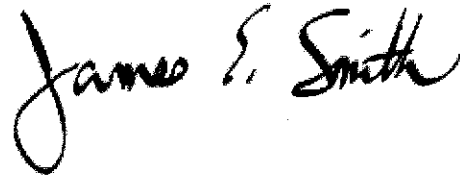
Representative William Lamberth



Representative Dennis Powers



Representative Bill Dunn




Representative James E. Smith



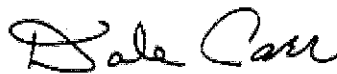
Representative Roger Kane



Representative Tim Wirgua



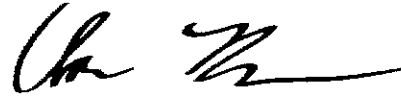
Senator Mike Bell



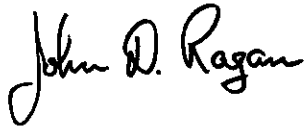
Representative Dale Carr



Representative Terri Lynn Weaver



Representative Clark Boyd



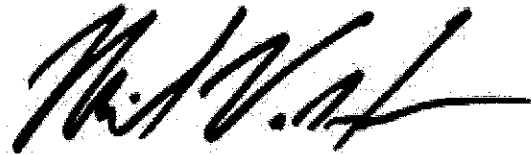
Representative John Ragan



Representative Mark White



Representative Sheila Butt



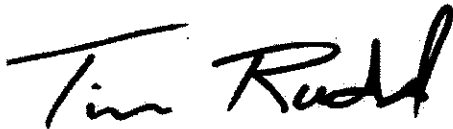
Representative Micah Van Huss



Senator Ken Yager



Senator Ferrell Haile



Representative Tim Rudd