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PACIFIC JUSTICE
INSTITUTE

EDWIN MEESE, III, ESQ.
Former Attorney General
Advisory Board Chairman

BRAD W. DACUS, ESQ.
President

KEVIN T. SNIDER, ESQ.
Chief Counsel

Jacquie Sullivan
Founder/President
In God We Trust -- America, Inc.
Bakersfield, California

Re: "In God We Trust" Displays

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

It has come to our attention that your organization is promoting displays throughout the nation commemorating the national motto, "In God We Trust." We are writing to offer our perspective on this important issue, and also to offer our representation at no charge should any government entities which approve the displays encounter any legal opposition.

By way of introduction, Pacific Justice Institute is a nonprofit organization which specializes in defending religious liberty, including our nation's religious heritage. PJI is currently an intervener/defendant which, alongside the U.S. Department of Justice, is providing the legal defense in *Newdow v. Lefevre*, a lawsuit challenging the inclusion of the national motto on our nation's currency.

As you may have heard, the federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously agreed with our position that the motto is constitutional. In its decision filed March 11, 2010, the Ninth Circuit explained that displaying such a venerable reminder of our national heritage and identity as the national motto is unquestionably constitutional.

The Ninth Circuit's ruling follows every other court and judge in the nation that has considered the national motto, including the following:

- *Lambeth v. Bd. of Comm'rs of Davidson County*, 407 F.3d 266 (4th Cir. 2005), held a county board's decision to authorize inscription of "In God We Trust" on facade of county government center did not constitute a violation of the Establishment Clause.
- *Schmidt v. Cline*, 127 F.Supp.2d 1169 (D. Kan. 2000), held constitutional the placement in a county building of posters bearing the motto. The court relied on a previous Tenth Circuit decision finding that the motto has a secular purpose akin to Justice O'Connor's well-known references to "ceremonial deism".
- *Myers v. Loudoun County School Bd.*, 251 F. Supp. 2d 1262 (E.D. Va. 2003), upheld as constitutional a school's implementation of a state statute requiring schools to post the national motto in every public school building.

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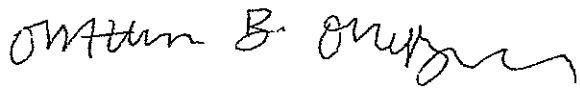
www.pacificjustice.org

- Numerous Supreme Court decisions and opinions of individual justices have pointed to the national motto as an example of constitutionality, *see, e.g, Wooley v. Maynard*, 430 U.S. 705, 717, n.15 (1977); *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668, 693 (1984); *County of Allegheny v. ACLU*, 492 U.S. 573, 602-3 (1989); *Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39, 45 (1980) (Rehnquist, J., concurring); *School Dist. of Abington Twp. v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203, 303 (1963) (Brennan, J. concurring); *Marsh v. Chambers*, 463 U.S. 783, 818 (1983) (Brennan, J. dissenting); *Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290, 322-323 (2000) (Rehnquist, C.J. dissenting); *Van Orden v. Perry*, 125 S.Ct. 2854, 2879 (2005) (Stevens, J. dissenting); *McCreary County v. ACLU*, 125 S.Ct. 2722, 2750 (2005) (Scalia, J. dissenting).

As the foregoing cases attest, numerous legal authorities at all levels of the federal judiciary and throughout the country support displaying the national motto in a public setting.

In conclusion, the Pacific Justice Institute would like to commend your organization for promoting the national motto, and to assure you that under applicable case law, such recognitions are clearly constitutional. Should any government entity receive legal threats from those who oppose even innocuous acknowledgements of religion in public life, the Pacific Justice Institute would be honored to defend them at no charge in state or federal court. To take advantage of this offer, or if you have any other questions about this important issue, please do not hesitate to contact Pacific Justice Institute at either (916) 857-6900 (Northern California office), (510) 834-7232 (Bay Area Office), (714) 796-7150 (Southern California office), or via our website at www.pji.org.

Sincerely,



Matthew B. McReynolds
Staff Attorney
PACIFIC JUSTICE INSTITUTE

(Sample Resolution)

City or County of _____

IN GOD WE TRUST

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF _____, in _____ COUNTY, STATE of _____, SUPPORTING THE DISPLAY OF THE NATIONAL MOTTO "IN GOD WE TRUST" IN THE _____ COUNCIL CHAMBERS IN A PROMINENT LOCATION AT CITY HALL.

WHEREAS, "In God We Trust" became the United States national motto on July 30, 1956, shortly after our nation led the world through the trauma of World War II and

WHEREAS, the words have been used on U.S. currency since 1864; and

WHEREAS, the same inspiring slogan is engraved above the entrance to the Senate Chamber as well as above the Speaker's dais in the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, in both war and peace, these words have been a profound source of strength and guidance to many generations of Americans; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to display this patriotic motto in the Council Chambers as a way to solemnize public occasions and express confidence in our society.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the City Council of the City of _____ does hereby resolve as follows:

Section 1. That the City Council of the City of _____ (and State), does hereby determine that the historic and patriotic words of our national motto, "In God We Trust," shall be permanently and prominently displayed in the _____ Council Chambers at City Hall.

Section 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this resolution and enter it into the book of original resolutions.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of _____, ___ (State), held on the __ day of _____, ____(year).

Add names and signatures of Mayor and Councilmembers.

Larry "Jay" Williams
Eastern District Supervisor

Barbara Hobbs
Central District Supervisor

Scott Dunn
Western District Supervisor

County of Giles

Paul "Chappy" Baker
At-Large Supervisor

Richard McCoy
At-Large Supervisor

Board of Supervisors

315 North Main Street
Pearisburg, Virginia 24134

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF GILES COUNTY, VIRGINIA SUPPORTING THE DISPLAY OF THE NATIONAL MOTTO "IN GOD WE TRUST" IN A PROMINENT LOCATION AT THE GILES COUNTY COURTHOUSE.

WHEREAS, "In God We Trust" became the United States national motto on July 30, 1956, shortly after our nation led the world through the trauma of World War II and

WHEREAS, the words have been used on U.S. currency since 1864; and

WHEREAS, the same inspiring slogan is engraved above the entrance to the Senate Chamber as well as above the Speaker's dais in the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, in both war and peace, these words have been a profound source of strength and guidance to many generations of Americans; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to display this patriotic motto in a prominent location as a way to solemnize public occasions and express confidence in our society.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Giles County Board of Supervisors does hereby resolve as follows:

Section 1. That the Board of Supervisors of Giles County, Virginia does hereby determine that the historic and patriotic words of our national motto, "In God We Trust," shall be permanently and prominently displayed at the Giles County Courthouse.

Section 2. The Board Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this resolution and enter it into the book of original resolutions.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Giles County, Virginia held on the 2ND day of APRIL, 2014.

	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Hobbs				X
Dunn	X			
Williams	X			
Baker	X			
McCoy	X			

Attest: Chris McKlarney
Chris McKlarney, Clerk

Telephone (540) 921-2525 Fax: (540) 921-1846

State of Utah

	State	City or County	County	Date Approved
1.	Utah	Davis County Commissioners	Davis	7/15/2014
2.	Utah	Duchesne City	Duchesne	5/13/2014

Utah "Yes Vote" Counties and Cities – 2

State of Virginia

	State	City or County	County	Date Approved
1.	Virginia	Appomattox County Supervisors	Appomattox	11/3/2014
2.	Virginia	Bedford County Supervisors	Bedford	12/22/2014
3.	Virginia	Buchanan County Supervisors	Buchanan	9/9/2013
4.	Virginia	Carroll County Supervisors	Carroll	12/8/2014
5.	Virginia	Culpeper County Supervisors	Culpepper	10/2/2013
6.	Virginia	Dickenson County Supervisors	Dickenson	12/16/2014
7.	Virginia	Floyd County Supervisors	Floyd	11/27/2014
8.	Virginia	Giles County Supervisors	Giles	4/2/2014
9.	Virginia	Grayson County Supervisors	Grayson	4/10/2014
10.	Virginia	Northumberland County Supervisors	Northumberland	Sep-09
11.	Virginia	Nottoway County Supervisors	Nottoway	10/16/2014
12.	Virginia	Page County Supervisors	Page	12/16/2014
13.	Virginia	Prince Edward County Supervisors	Prince Edward	9/1/2014
14.	Virginia	Roanoke County Supervisors	Roanoke	11/18/19
15.	Virginia	Russell County Supervisors	Russell	9/8/2014
16.	Virginia	Tazewell County Supervisors	Tazewell	9/2/2014
17.	Virginia	Town of Appalachia	Wise	10/16/2014
18.	Virginia	Blackstone	Nottoway	5/22/2014
19.	Virginia	Town of Bluefield	Tazewell	10/14/2014
20.	Virginia	City of Boones Mill	Franklin	10/10/2013
21.	Virginia	Boynton	Mecklenburg	5/13/2014
22.	Virginia	Chase City	Mecklenberg	Oct-56
23.	Virginia	Town of Cleveland	Russell	9/22/2014
24.	Virginia	Danville	*Independent City	
25.	Virginia	Exmore	Northhampton	5/13/2014
26.	Virginia	Town of Farmville	Prince Edward	5/26/2014
27.	Virginia	Town of Glasgow	Rockbridge	9/9/2014
28.	Virginia	Halifax	Halifax	4/8/2014
29.	Virginia	City of Hillsville	Carroll	Sep-60
30.	Virginia	Independence	Grayson	11/12/2013

31.	Virginia	Town of Luray	Page	10/28/2014
32.	Virginia	Manassas Park	*Independent City	11/15/2011
33.	Virginia	City of Middleton	Fredrick	3/10/2014
34.	Virginia	Town of Mount Jackson	Shenandoah	11/11/2014
35.	Virginia	Pamplin City	Appomattox	12/5/2013
36.	Virginia	Pennington Gap	Lee	4/21/2014
37.	Virginia	Rocky Mount	Franklin	4/14/2014
38.	Virginia	City of Shenandoah	Page	Sep-60
39.	Virginia	Virgilina	Halifax	9/18/2014
40.	Virginia	Town of Wise	Wise	8/26/2014

***Virginia** "Yes Vote" Counties and Cities* – **40**

State of Washington

	State	*City or County*	*County*	*Date Approved*
1.	Washington	Pierce County Commissioners	Pierce	7/29/2014

***Washington** "Yes Vote" Counties and Cities* – **1**

State of West Virginia

	State	*City or County*	*County*	*Date Approved*
1.	West Virginia	Grant County Commissioners	Grant	5/24/2014
2.	West Virginia	Tyler County Commissioners	Tyler	7/10/2014
3.	West Virginia	Clarksburg	Harrison	12/4/2013

***West Virginia** "Yes Vote" Counties and Cities* – **3**

453 – Total # of "Yes Vote" Counties and Cities Across AMERICA!