



**Republican
National
Committee**

Counsel's Office

RESOLUTION AFFIRMING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACTS

WHEREAS, The Puritan Pilgrims came to America seeking religious freedom from an established, state-supported church; and, by them our first written framework of government, The Mayflower Compact (1620), was written to maintain order and establish a civil society with just and equal laws;

WHEREAS, The first two elements of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution (ratified 1791) preserve and guarantee religious freedom, specifically stating that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof";

WHEREAS, The Republican Party (1854), birthed in a battle to extend these and other rights to all our fellow citizens, has faithfully advocated for policies protecting and nurturing religious freedom;

WHEREAS, The federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 ("RFRA") restored eroding religious rights by stating that the federal government may not impose on religious conscience by enforcing a law that "substantially burden[s] a person's exercise of religion";

WHEREAS, The RFRA, as applied by the federal government, has been a settled, helpful feature of American jurisprudence for more than two decades, and 31 states have enacted laws similar to the RFRA to protect against state infringement of the rights of conscience and of religious freedom; and

WHEREAS, Human dignity and religious conscience have both been respected and upheld by the RFRA; therefore be it

RESOLVED, The Republican National Committee stands firm in upholding natural, human, constitutional, and, under the RFRA, statutory rights of religious freedom;

RESOLVED, The Republican National Committee supports and encourages States' actions to enact laws that mirror the federal RFRA to protect citizens' rights to lead all aspects of their lives according to their deeply held religious beliefs; and

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RESOLVED, The Republican National Committee maintains today (2015) that religious freedom continues to be a critically important factor in sustaining the legacy of freedom in America.

**As adopted by the Republican National Committee on May 15, 2015.*

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