

Dear Editor,

Of all the liberties that Americans hold dear, none is more important than the free exercise of religion. Today, too many people do not consider why this freedom is foundational to all our other freedoms and why Georgia should pass both the First Amendment Defense Act (FADA, now incorporated into HB 757) and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA- SB 129).

While this letter is no place for a history lesson, President Woodrow Wilson's words from 1913 should help guide our legislators. "A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about."

Current trends in our nation and particularly on our college campuses reveal that we are not doing a good job stewarding the blessings of liberty. As a free society, we can only flourish if each of us peacefully respects the right of one another to disagree at the most fundamental levels of life's decisions.

We are entering a stage when same-sex marriage proponents are willing to use the coercive power of government to rob religious citizens of their economic rights to participate in the marketplace. This is occurring when wedding planners, bakers, photographers, and business people peacefully decline to provide goods or services for this newly found right to same-sex marriage. Even the late British economist Harold Laski, an advocate for socialism and central planning, recognized the great need for a diverse society to "make the basis of our state consent to disagreement."

America, the land of the free, means we must be free to peacefully disagree and freely exercise in speech and action our religious convictions in all aspects of our lives. Call Governor Nathan Deal (404-656-1776) and Speaker David Ralston (404-656-5020) to pass FADA and RFRA.

Sincerely,