



ERLC Supports a Strong Office of International Religious Freedom

Southern Baptists have long recognized the importance of religious liberty for all people. Stretching back generations, Southern Baptists have a rich heritage of affirming the importance of and fighting to maintain protections for religious liberty for people of all faiths. The Baptist Faith & Message states “a free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.”

Persecution varies dramatically from country to country, ranging from fines to the death penalty. As of 2024, the death penalty is a fatal consequence in eight countries due to blasphemy laws. These laws seek to limit or criminalize speech that counters state-sanctioned religious beliefs and prevent conversion from one religion to another.

As Southern Baptists, we desire to further the work of the Great Commission and see lives transformed by the gospel. Thus, the ERLC will continue working to repeal blasphemy and apostasy laws and champion the right of all people to worship without fear of oppression and persecution. We advocate for those persecuted for their faith by partnering with diverse coalitions who are committed to religious liberty in order to advocate for international religious freedom, fight against persecution, and raise awareness of persecuted religious minorities in Congress. We are unwavering in our defense of vulnerable and penalized individuals worldwide and will contend for our persecuted fellow believers in Christ.

Furthermore, the ERLC urges the Trump administration and Congress to swiftly appoint and confirm a strong ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom, a role essential for advancing global religious liberty and protecting conscience rights. We call upon the administration and the appointed ambassador to champion religious freedom abroad in order to promote religious liberty, defend human dignity, and foster global stability. Through such a commitment, we will be better equipped to fulfill the Great Commission and win souls for the Kingdom of Heaven.

For more policies that protect a free church and a free state, visit erlc.com/religiousliberty.