

Reps. Miller, Howrylak and Kesto offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 223.

A resolution to declare January 16, 2018, as Religious Freedom Day in the state of Michigan

Whereas, The United States of America with its democratic system of representation is dependent upon the fundamental truths that all people are created equal and are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and

Whereas, Freedom of conscience has been highly valued in America since its earliest beginnings, not only by individuals seeking religious freedom in the American colonies but through colonial charters and laws; and

Whereas, Even with such an inspired beginning, some colonies sought religious uniformity and persecuted dissenters, driving them out to more tolerant colonies, such as Rhode Island, and leading to new colonies such as Pennsylvania in 1681, created as a refuge for persecuted Quakers; and

Whereas, Expanding on this effort, Thomas Jefferson penned his first draft of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in 1777 to fully disestablish the Church of England, an effort that finally came to fruition on January 16, 1786; and

Whereas, Thomas Jefferson said of the First Amendment that it "guard[s] in the same sentence, and under the same words, the freedom of religion, of speech, and of the press; insomuch as that whatever violates either throws down the sanctuary which covers the others;" and

Whereas, A long line of presidents, from President George Washington to our current day have recognized the unique and foundational role of religious freedom; and

Whereas, For countless people of the United States, faith is an integral part of every aspect of daily life and is not limited to their homes, houses of worship, or doctrinal creeds; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare January 16, 2018, as Religious Freedom Day in the state of Michigan. We commemorate that great historical accomplishment that provided the heart of our First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. We encourage the citizens of our nation to pray in his and her own manner, seeking God's blessings on our families and government officials for personal renewal, moral awakening, and a new spirit of harmony across our land; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge all Americans to join in observing this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.