

Human Rights Committee 2024 Resolution

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONCERNS WITH CHAPLAINS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the United States of America (USA) is a pluralistic society, comprised of a variety of faith traditions, and

WHEREAS, the United States Constitution includes the Establishment Clause in the First Amendment, which prohibits the government from establishing a religion, and

WHEREAS, public schools are an institution of the government for the benefit of all members of the community, regardless of faith tradition, and

WHEREAS, House Bill 240 (HB 240) would permit public schools to secure chaplains to assist in counseling, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) opposes HB 240, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the OFT believes that fully accredited School Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists should be in every public school, regardless of whether a chaplain is secured to assist on a voluntary basis, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the OFT raises concerns around the process in which individual school districts may select one faith tradition over another in securing a chaplain, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the OFT is concerned over the marginalization of students, their families, and staff members who may not hold the same, if any, faith tradition as the chaplain, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the OFT shares a concern over instances when a chaplain's counseling would not follow policies and procedures as adopted by school districts or the State of Ohio, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the OFT firmly believes in the separation of church and state in matters of public schools as a fundamental tenet of the concerns expressed within this resolution.