



## Amendment 8, Trusting Government Over God

Many states are pushing forward legislation to remove restrictions on the use of government funding for religious based activities or institutions. The argument in favor of such legislation claims preventing or restricting government money to religious organizations is an expression of religious bigotry and discrimination. That argument is a dangerous falsehood. Florida currently has this issue on their November ballot. Florida's Amendment 8, titled "Religious Freedom", is a misnomer to say the least. If this Amendment or others like it are passed they will actually be detrimental to Religious Liberty. This type of legislation will not promote religious liberty it will do the opposite:

1. It will open a door to silence religious organizations and their beliefs in order to receive government funding.
2. It will force tax payers to fund ALL RELIGIOUS activity, to include Islamic, Satanic, and cult religious activity.
3. It will give the government the ability to promote religious activities through government funding, directly undermining the true principle of separation of church and state; the fundamental principle that government has no place in the church.

If you question these conclusions, please read on and find out the truth. If you agree, please share this analysis so we may defeat this type of legislation and support religious liberty throughout the nation.

In Florida, Amendment 8 is an effort to repeal the Blaine Amendment, a common provision in many state Constitutions. The Blaine Amendment reads in part:

*"No revenue of the state or any political subdivision or agency thereof shall ever be taken from the public treasury directly or indirectly in aid of any church, sect, or religious denomination or in aid of any sectarian institution."*

Opponents of the Blaine Amendment claim that the restriction upon using government funds for religious purposes or institutions is an attempt to discriminate *against* religions. Notice there is no particular religion singled out in the language of the amendment as some claim, the amendment clearly says "any." The truth is the Blaine Amendment reiterates principles



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dedicated to the preservation of Religious Liberty and the prevention of government intrusion into the church.

The newly proposed language will establish a Constitutional right to tax funds. It reads, "No individual or entity may be discriminated against or barred from receiving funding on the basis of religious identity or belief." Did you catch that? NO INDIVIDUAL or entity may be barred from receiving funding. Wow! That's a big door. Notice that the language does not specify organizations engaged in non-religious activity such as soup kitchens, as some supporters falsely claim.

In our ignorance, we are repeating a battle in American history that our founders already fought and settled. Shortly after the ratification of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, several legislators, Patrick Henry being one, put forth a bill to pay Christian Teachers with tax dollars. The bill was titled, A Bill Establishing A Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion. The purpose of this bill was to pay Christian teachers' salaries out of collected tax revenue. Patrick Henry was a great defender of Liberty and an ardent Christian. In this case, his desire to defend the faith blinded him to the dangers of inviting the government into the church in the form of tax subsidies. Fortunately, there were other legislators present that knew the dangers of such an act, and their stand helped to clarify why good intentions can lead to dangerous destinations.

To understand why it is wrong for tax dollars to pay for religious activities, we must really think about the process as a whole. When the government pays a person or an organization to perform a service with tax dollars, that individual or organization places themselves under the oversight of the government, much like an employee. Since, tax dollars are not the property of the government but of the American people, the American people cannot allow the government to spend their money with no accountability. Therefore, regulation of government spending of taxpayer dollars is required. So, to take tax dollars invites government regulation, influence and control into the religious organization. In opposition to Henry's Bill, an "Association of Ministers and Delegates" wrote this response:

*"No man or set of Men are entitled to exclusive or separate Emoluments or*

