

Religious liberty wins twin victories in Iowa

Religious liberty won a pair of victories at the Iowa Capitol last week.

On Wednesday, Feb. 20, Gov. Kim Reynolds signed a proclamation affirming religious liberty in Iowa:

“Both the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Iowa affirm the right of all citizens to freely exercise their religious faith in the public square without being deprived of other rights or privileges,” the proclamation reads in part. “Well-defined religious liberties work to secure other civil liberties through a vigorous public debate where all participants may exercise such influence as their ideas and values might engender.”

Brenda Brown, state director of Iowa Prayer Caucus Network and Iowa coordinator for The National Day of Prayer, attended the signing ceremony in the governor’s office, along with Chuck Hurley of The FAMiLY LEADER and several others.

“Our freedom of religion is vital to us as a state and as a nation,” Brown told TFL. “God created us to be equal and have free will to serve who we want to serve and to allow others to serve who they desire to serve.”

Earlier in the week, a Senate subcommittee scored another victory for religious liberty by advancing SF 240, a bill akin to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (or RFRA).

SF 240 would protect people of any religion, or no religion, from the government interfering with the exercise of their sincerely held beliefs. It means, first, that the government must prove it has a “compelling governmental interest” before it fines or restricts a person’s religious liberty. Second, it

requires the government to use “the least restrictive means” of action against that person when it does have a compelling interest.

Over 20 states, and indeed the federal government under President Bill Clinton, have enacted similar laws.

But in states where such protections don’t exist, local and state governments and commissions have slapped people with fines and other penalties for exercising their religious liberty – often in uneven and prejudicial ways against people of faith. A RFRA-style law in Iowa would protect people of any faith, or no faith, from these kind of injustices.

Championing religious liberty is a cornerstone of The FAMiLY LEADER’s work at the Iowa Capitol, and TFL is a registered lobbyist in favor of SF 240. Chuck Hurley, vice president of The FAMiLY LEADER, and Denise Bubeck, deputy director of TFL’s Church Ambassador Network, were among those who testified in favor of the bill at the subcommittee hearing:



The bill passed subcommittee with Republican Sens. Guth and Edler recommending it for consideration by the full Senate

Local Government Committee, while Democrat Sen. Robert Hogg voting against.

SF 240 is just one of over 50 different bills The FAMIly LEADER is tracking and registered for or against at the Iowa Capitol this year.