



# REPORT

from the Capital

## Supreme Court sides with state in case involving prisoner's rights

WASHINGTON — The United States Supreme Court ruled April 20 that a federal law protecting the religious liberty of prison inmates does not entitle a prisoner to monetary damages from the state if that right is denied.

Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, criticized the 6-2 decision in *Sossamon v. Texas* as a "pinched view" of the intent of Congress when it passed the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) of 2000. The BJC led the coalition which championed that federal law, designed to protect religious freedom of prisoners and in zoning and landmark laws.

The BJC filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case supporting Texas inmate Harvey Leroy Sossamon, who was not permitted to leave his cell to attend worship services due to disciplinary confinement.

The BJC brief, filed with other groups including the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the Interfaith Alliance, argued that a part of the law empowering prisoners to seek "appropriate relief" meant both injunctive and monetary remedies.

Writing for the Court majority, however, Associate Justice Clarence Thomas ruled that, because there is no "unequivocal declaration" in the law that says individual states were intended to be subject to monetary damages, when Texas accepted federal funds it did not waive its "sovereign immunity," a legal doctrine that says a government cannot be sued without its own consent.

Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor, joined by Associate Justice Stephen Breyer, filed a dissenting opinion saying that excluding a legal right to monetary damages "severely undermines the broad protections of religious exercise" intended by Congress.

Associate Justice Elena Kagan did not participate in the case.

RLUIPA was a second attempt by



Congress to protect religious rights of prisoners. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act, adopted seven years before RLUIPA to prevent laws that substantially burden a person's right to religious exercise, was ruled unconstitutional as applied to the states in 1997.

Sossamon was among several prisoners denied permission to attend religious services but allowed to leave their cells for other purposes, such as educational classes and to use the library. He was also among prisoners denied permission to use the prison chapel for religious services, even though inmates were allowed to use it for non-religious purposes.

Sossamon sued the state of Texas for violating the federal law barring governments from imposing "a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person residing in or confined to an institution" unless the burden is "the least restrictive means" of furthering "a compelling governmental interest."

In its brief, the Baptist Joint Committee and seven other organizations said monetary relief is "essential to RLUIPA's purpose of deterring pervasive and unjustified burdens on religious exercise."

"We are disappointed in the majority's pinched view of what was a clear congressional intent to provide prisoners broad protection for religious liberty and a robust remedy for its violation, including monetary damages," Walker said.

—Bob Allen, Associated Baptist Press

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### INSIDE:

- Next Generation . . . 3
- Shurden Lectures . . . 4
- Two decisions . . . . 6
- RLC Luncheon . . . . . 8

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# Panel cites Egypt for religious freedom violations

WASHINGTON — A religious freedom watchdog panel has added Egypt to its list of the worst violators of religious liberty, citing attacks on Coptic Christians that occurred surrounding the downfall of former President Hosni Mubarak.

“The Egyptian government engaged in and tolerated religious freedom violations both before and after President Hosni Mubarak stepped down on Feb. 11,” said Leonard Leo, chairman of the bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, which released its report April 28.

“In his waning months, religious freedom conditions were rapidly deteriorating and since his departure, we’ve seen nothing to indicate that these conditions have improved.”

Members of the independent commission also continued their criticism of the Obama administration for not making religious freedom a higher priority.

“President Obama’s administration has yet to break from the practice of previous administrations of keeping the issue of religious freedom on the margins of U.S. foreign policy,” the report states.

Leo acknowledged the recent confirmation of the Rev. Suzan Johnson Cook as the new ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom (see page 7) and said he hopes it will lead to “meaningful actions” in the near future.

Commissioners, who are appointed by the president and members of Congress, listed a total of 14 countries that they recommend the State Department designate as “countries of particular concern.” The department currently lists eight such countries, a number that remains unchanged since President George W. Bush left office.

Countries on the State Department’s list include Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Uzbekistan.

In addition to Egypt, USCIRF says the list should also include Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Vietnam.

State Department spokesman Evan Owen differed with the commission’s analysis, saying his department issues reports on both religious freedom and anti-Semitism, and now has special envoys for both areas. He said the department will consider USCIRF’s recommendations as it weighs updating its list of the worst violators of religious freedom.

“It’s a long process and with the appointment of an ambassador for religious freedom, we expect it to be a more streamlined process in the future,” he said.

Commissioners continue to hope that Pakistan and other nations will rescind anti-blasphemy laws that they believe lead to violent violations of religious freedom.

The panel’s 379-page report was dedicated to Shahbaz Bhatti, a Pakistani minister for religious minorities who was assassinated in March after challenging such laws.

“Pakistan is arguably the most glaring omission to the State Department’s CPC list, as the government is both responsible for and tolerates egregious violations of religious freedom,” said Commissioner Nina Shea.

USCIRF also designates “watch list countries,” nations whose violations do not merit a listing as the worst offenders but nevertheless require monitoring. This year’s list includes Afghanistan, Belarus, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Laos, Russia, Somalia, Tajikistan, Turkey and Venezuela.

—Adelle M. Banks, Religion News Service



## *Honorary and memorial gifts to the Baptist Joint Committee*

**In honor of  
Walter Shurden**  
by Sherry Shurden Brewer

**In honor of  
Charles Smith**  
by anonymous

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Brent Walker**  
by Walter and  
Kay Shurden

**In memory of  
Donald J. Dunlap**  
by Kay Dunlap

**In memory of  
Grover D. Jones**  
by Ethelene Jones

# REFLECTIONS

## Reaching the next generation for liberty

On November 12, 2001, Brad and Connie Bull — good friends and Baptist Joint Committee supporters — gave birth to a son. The proud parents quickly sent me a picture of John-Clarke Leland Bull.

Brad and Connie had named their son after two Baptist heroes: John Clarke, Baptist minister and co-founder of Rhode Island, and John Leland, Baptist evangelist fighting for religious liberty in Virginia. (Their daughter, Delyn, is named for Brad's paternal grandmother who agreed to marriage only if her Methodist fiancé became a Baptist!)

Not all of us are sufficiently steeped in our Baptist heritage or committed to religious liberty that we would name a child after multiple ancestors. But it is important that we all understand how critical it is to communicate to the next generation the principles that underpin our commitment to religious freedom and our appreciation for the price paid by our predecessors to ensure it for us.

I know I am, and the Baptist Joint Committee surely is. Let me briefly outline for you three ways in which we are determined to do this.

For the past 30 years, the Baptist Joint Committee has had a very effective internship program. Started by James Dunn — with Bill Underwood (now president of Mercer University) as the first intern — the program has developed over the years into one of the premier internships on Capitol Hill. We generally enjoy six, sometimes seven interns each year. Some are in between college and graduate school (often law school or seminary), some are still undergraduates, and others have finished their schooling.

The benefits of the internship program go both ways. The interns learn a great deal, are modestly compensated for their efforts and absorb the new commitment to religious liberty that makes the Baptist Joint Committee unique. The Baptist Joint Committee, on the other hand, benefits from the interns' hard work and, perhaps more importantly, from the interns then becoming ambassadors championing the cause of religious liberty on their college campus, law school or seminary and throughout their careers.

We now have an alumni group of some 150 former interns leading our churches and colleges, making laws in state legislatures and spreading the gospel of religious liberty in their daily lives.

Another prong of our strategy to reach the next generation is being implemented through the

Walter B. and Kay W. Shurden Lectures on Religious Liberty and Separation of Church and State. Through the incredible generosity of Buddy and Kay Shurden, who endowed annual lectureship on college and seminary campuses on an annual rotating basis, the Baptist Joint Committee is taking the initiative to the students themselves. In April of this year, we completed our sixth Shurden Lectureship with Melissa Rogers delivering insightful and inspiring messages to students at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Ky. (You can read more about these lectures on p. 4-5.) Because of the Shurdens' commitment, these lectureships will go on in perpetuity. Next year we will be at Mercer University. We then go to Stetson University in 2013 and Baylor University in 2014.

A third way in which we are reaching out to young people is through our Religious Liberty Essay Contest. Open to high school juniors and seniors and now in its sixth year, the contest seeks to engage high school students on a religious liberty topic. It offers a top prize of \$1,000 and a trip to the nation's capital, \$500 for second place and \$100 for third place. When we first started we received only a handful of essays. This year we netted more than 370 qualified essays from 43 states, far surpassing our previous high of 74 in 2009. We plan to announce this year's winner sometime before the Baptist Joint Committee's Religious Liberty Council Luncheon at the CBF General Assembly in Tampa this June.

How can you help? Tell us about promising potential interns; earmark gifts for the Shurden Lectures so that someday we will be able to fund two lectureships a year; encourage your children and students who attend your churches to participate in the essay contest.

By the way, the Bull family is doing well. In fact, they showed up at the BJC offices last month. (John-Clarke was a little chagrined to learn that I had kept his baby picture in my desk drawer all these years.) Brad and Connie, professors at Tennessee Baptists' Carson-Newman College, are furthering the education of John-Clarke and Delyn through tours of the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the U.S. Capitol, the monuments on the National Mall and, yes, a visit to the Baptist Joint Committee. You should come see us, too!



J. Brent Walker  
Executive Director

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**“[I]t is important that we all understand how critical it is to communicate to the next generation the principles that underpin our commitment to religious freedom and our appreciation for the price paid by our predecessors to ensure it for us.”**

# ► Rogers handles hot topics at 20

GEORGETOWN, KY — Church-state expert Melissa Rogers joked she had chosen noncontroversial topics for her presentations April 4-5 as speaker for the 2011 Walter B. and Kay W. Shurden Lectures on Religious Liberty and Separation of Church and State. A glance at the program and her three lecture topics suggested otherwise.

Rogers handled hot topics including religious expression in American public life, a Christian and American case for defending Muslims' free exercise rights and the Faith-based Initiative under presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama in presentations sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee and held on the campus of Georgetown College.

## Muslims' Free Exercise Rights

In her case for defending Muslims' free exercise rights, Rogers lamented the challenging environment in which conversations about American Muslims have taken place since September 11, including, most recently, challenges resulting from election-year politics and the flap over locating an Islamic center just blocks from where the Twin Towers once stood in New York. Despite government's long recognition of Islam as a religion, Rogers said the challenges have included claims by some that it might not qualify as a religion under the First Amendment and thus would not deserve any First Amendment free-exercise protection.

Rogers pointed out Americans' long tradition of defending each others' rights, including civil rights and women's suffrage. This list also includes religious freedom. "Time and again, people in groups of one faith have defended the rights of people in another faith group," Rogers said.

"Men and women in movements like these have reinforced the notion that we aren't American because we're the same race or because we're the same religion," Rogers said. "We're Americans because we subscribe to a set of transcendent ideas and values, including equal justice under law and religious freedom for everyone. We are Americans because we insist that all Americans are entitled to the blessings of liberty and the dignity of justice."

She said in contrast to rhetoric suggesting that all Muslims are responsible for the evil attack of "a lunatic fringe" — a notion she says is wrong, counterproductive, and a waste of precious time and resources — Americans should defend Muslims' free exercise rights.

In her Christian case for defending Muslims' free exercise rights, Rogers pointed to the Bible, specifically stories in Genesis that reveal God created men and women in his image and with the freedom to choose, including in matters of faith.

"It is this freedom to choose that makes faith so meaningful for us," she said. "The fact that we can say no to God, makes our yes to God so deeply meaningful." She concluded that "Christians have a duty to safeguard the ability of each person to listen to and follow their conscience and to practice their faith free from coercion."

However, she said that defending the right of a person of another faith to practice their faith is not the same as defending the truth claims of another faith. And "defending the right to practice a different religion is not the same as giving up one's ability to criticize another religion."

## Religious Expression in American Public Life

Rogers opened the lectureship with a discussion of religious expression in American public life, and in doing so, combated the most common fallacy she has noticed about the topic, "that the Supreme Court has silenced religion in this sphere."

"While we might well disagree about whether the Supreme Court came to the right conclusion in one case or another, clearly its decisions preserve a role for religion in our nation's public life," she said.

She organized religious expression in public life into two broad categories. One involved erecting displays with religious symbols and Scripture on government property and is called the civil religion model.

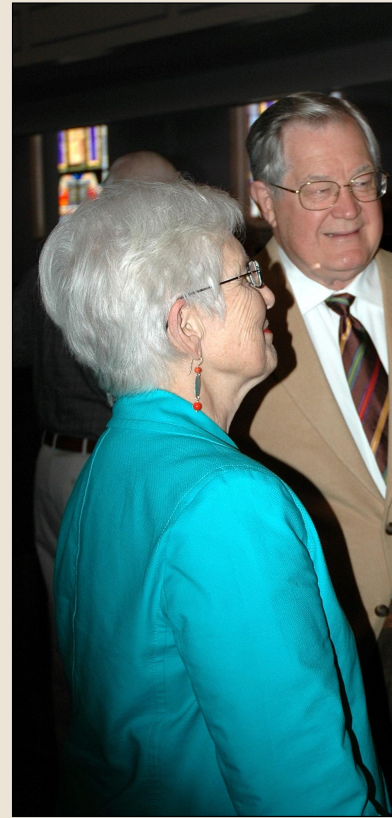
The other model, called the equal access model, provides, for example, that if government opens its property to community groups generally, then it must open its property to community religious groups on the same basis. "I vote strongly for the equal access approach," Rogers said. "I believe that model does a much better job of keeping faith free.

"When the government is given power to select certain religious Scriptures or symbols for posting or display, it gains a degree of control over religion. It will exercise that control in ways that best advance governmental interests, not spiritual interests, and that will warp religion's witness," Rogers said.

She said the key question under constitutional standards is to whom the religious speech is attributable — the government or non-governmental groups or individuals. Therefore, "our constitutional standard captures the common sense truth, that when a Muslim girl wears a headscarf to public school or when a Jewish boy wears a yarmulke to public school or when a Christian girl wears a cross necklace to school, it is abundantly clear that these are expressions of personal faith — not those of the government.

"Under the equal access model, the speech that may be reli-

## SCENES FROM



Walter and Kay Shurden talk with Georgetown College President Melissa Rogers (right) during the 2011 Walter B. and Kay W. Shurden Lectures on Religious Liberty and Separation of Church and State.

SHURDEN LECTURE DONORS  
ing the lectures. Special tha

# 2011 Shurden Lectures

## FROM THE LECTURES AT GEORGETOWN COLLEGE



Georgetown College President Bill Crouch and Kay W. Shurden Lectures on Religious Liberty and Separation of Church and State.



Shurden Lecturer Melissa Rogers (left) stands with BJC Executive Director Brent Walker, Kay Shurden, Walter Shurden, and BJC General Counsel Holly Hollman after the 2011 Shurden Lectures. In 2004, the Shurdens made a gift to the BJC to establish an annual lectureship on the issues of religious liberty and the separation of church and state.



While the BJC was on the campus of Georgetown College, Executive Director Brent Walker spoke at a luncheon with supporters of the Baptist Joint Committee and Georgetown.

### LECTURE VIDEOS ONLINE

Full videos of the three lectures are available at the BJC Vimeo page.  
<http://vimeo.com/bjcvideos>



The lectures were endowed with a gift from Walter B. and Kay W. Shurden, but others have given toward a promise of expanded thanks to endowers **Bill and Carolyn Blevins, Hardy and Ardelle Clemons, Sophia James, and Jimmy and Kaye Nickell.**

religious ... occurs on government property but it's not part of any government program or activity. It is solely the speech of the non-governmental groups and individuals" and is therefore free from governmental regulation, control and influence.

#### Faith-based Partnerships

In her presentation on Faith-based partnerships, Rogers, who served as chair of President Obama's first Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, gave an overview of the history of public-private partnerships, including mention of U.S. Supreme Court precedent. She then discussed the Faith-based Initiative under presidents Bush and Obama, comparing and contrasting the administrations' handling of seven categories, including employment discrimination based on religion, restrictions on grant money and rights of social service beneficiaries.

Rogers serves as director of the Wake Forest University School of Divinity Center for Religion and Public Affairs and as a non-resident senior fellow at The Brookings Institution. She also teaches

courses on church-state relations and Christianity and public policy within the divinity school. Rogers previously served as general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee.

In 2004, the Shurdens of Macon, Ga., made a gift to the BJC to establish the annual lectureship. Designed to enhance the ministry and programs of the Baptist Joint Committee, the lectures will be held at Mercer University every three years and at another seminary, college or university the other years.

A nationally noted church historian, Dr. Walter B. Shurden is the founder of the Center for Baptist Studies and, until his retirement in 2007, was the Callaway Professor of Christianity at Mercer. He is now Minister at Large, Mercer University. Dr. Kay W. Shurden, a retired professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Mercer University School of Medicine, is a noted author and maintains a practice in counseling and supervision.

—Jeff Huett



K. Hollyn Hollman  
General Counsel

## Decisions diminish religious liberty protections

The U.S. Supreme Court has issued decisions in both of its religious freedom cases this term. But just because we didn't have to wait until June does not mean the Court did us any favors. The BJC filed briefs in both cases, and the decisions were disappointments. They illustrate the difference between valuing religious liberty in theory and actually protecting that liberty in practice.

*Sossamon v. Texas* is a statutory interpretation case where the Court adopted a narrow reading of the remedies available when a state violates a prisoner's rights under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). The Court made it more difficult to enforce a law that was

carefully designed to provide strong religious exercise rights for institutionalized persons.

RLUIPA was passed with broad support and a congressional record demonstrating that state institutions sometimes restrict religious liberty in arbitrary and egregious ways. Indeed, the majority in *Sossamon* noted that the plain language and meaning of RLUIPA's substantive provisions provides heightened protection to religious exercise. Congress made

clear that the statute should be read to provide "broad protection of religious exercise."

Unfortunately, the Court undercut this protection by holding that the statute's provision of "appropriate relief" could not be read to include money damages. As Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor noted in dissent, "It is difficult to believe that Congress would have devoted such care and effort to establishing significant statutory protections for religious exercise and specifically extended those protections to persons in state institutions, yet withheld from plaintiffs a crucial tool for securing the rights the statute grants." After *Sossamon*, prisoners may still sue state defendants for burdening their religious exercise, but plaintiffs are "forced to seek enforcement of those rights with one hand tied behind their backs."

Even worse than the Court's narrowing of RLUIPA's enforcement provisions is its obliteration of taxpayer standing in *Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn, et al.* In *Winn*, the question was not about how to correct a constitutional violation but about whether the plaintiffs could even get into court (known as "standing to sue") to challenge a law alleged to provide taxpayer support to religion in violation of the

Establishment Clause.

In a 5-4 decision, the Court ruled that the plaintiffs do not have standing because they challenged a tax credit as opposed to a tax "extracted" from citizens. The Arizona program at issue in *Winn* allows any individual to direct up to \$500 of his or her state income tax bill to a state tuition organization, which then provides private school scholarships. Plaintiffs alleged that the program operates unconstitutionally, primarily because many of the participating tuition organizations award scholarships only to religious schools.

The majority's opinion, written by Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy, focuses on the mechanism Arizona used for the alleged establishment of religion and, in essence, leaves the doctrine of taxpayer standing hanging by a thread. The Court held that the taxpayer plaintiffs did not have standing under *Flast v. Cohen* (1968), the case that established the narrow and necessary exception to the general rule against taxpayer standing. The rule in *Flast* recognizes taxpayer standing when the government uses its taxing and spending power in violation of the Establishment Clause. In *Winn*, however, the Court denied standing because the Arizona program did not extract a tax.

In *Hein v. Freedom from Religion Foundation* (2007), a case that challenged aspects of the Bush administration's Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives, the Court denied taxpayer standing to challenge executive branch expenditures. *Winn* has now effectively eliminated the doctrine of taxpayer standing. A state legislature can avoid a constitutional challenge simply by using tax credits instead of a direct appropriation.

Associate Justice Elena Kagan, writing her first dissent since joining the Court, sharply criticized the Court's decision. She said, "This novel distinction in standing law between appropriations and tax expenditures has as little basis in principle as it has in our precedent. ... Taxpayers who oppose state aid of religion have equal reason to protest whether that aid flows from the one form of subsidy or the other."

As the four dissenting justices recognized, the decision is at odds with a long line of Establishment Clause cases brought by taxpayers to challenge government subsidization of religion, and the consequences are serious. The demise of taxpayer standing necessarily diminishes the strength of the Establishment Clause to protect religious freedom for all.

"[The decisions] illustrate the difference between valuing religious liberty in theory and actually protecting that liberty in practice."

## Court dismisses challenge to National Day of Prayer

WASHINGTON — The law calling for an annual National Day of Prayer imposes solely on the duties of the U.S. president, leaving private citizens no legal standing to challenge it, a federal appeals court ruled April 14.

The unanimous decision overturns a 2010 lower court ruling that found the law unconstitutional.

“If anyone suffers injury ... that person is the president, who is not complaining,” ruled a three-judge panel of the Chicago-based 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The panel described the presidential proclamations that follow the law as requests, not commands of the public.

“Those who do not agree with a president’s statement may speak in opposition to it; they are not entitled to silence the speech of which they disapprove,” the court said.

The Freedom from Religion Foundation, which had argued that the proclamation violates the Constitution’s prohibition of an official “establishment” of religion, said it would seek a rehearing by the circuit court’s full panel of judges.

Annie Laurie Gaylor, the foundation’s co-founder, said she believed the appeals court would have ruled in her group’s favor if it had addressed the merits of the case rather than dismissing it over standing.

“Our challenge is so strong, our claim is so correct,” she said. “The First Amendment says, ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.’ ‘No law’ should mean no law!”

Family Research Council President Tony Perkins hailed the ruling.

“The court is to be commended for rejecting even the idea of a federal lawsuit that demands this kind of religious expression be scrubbed from the public square,” he said.

—Adelle M. Banks, *Religion News Service*

## Evangelicals named to ministry watchdog panel

WASHINGTON — The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability has announced members of a commission to advise a Capitol Hill review of financial reform of religious groups.

Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, asked the council to lead an independent review of “self-reform” of religious organizations after he concluded a three-year probe of alleged lavish spending by six major broadcast ministries.

On April 13, the ECFA said the 15-member panel will include Oral Roberts University President Mark Rutland, Campus Crusade for Christ President Stephen Douglass and megachurch leaders Joel Hunter and Bishop Kenneth Ulmer.

Sean Faircloth, executive director of the Secular Coalition for America, criticized the choices.

“Stacking this so-called ‘independent’ commission with people representing only one narrow religious viewpoint is entirely inappropriate,” he said.

ECFA President Dan Busby said the commission will seek advice from legal experts, leaders from a variety of faiths, and representatives of mostly secular nonprofits. The three-year process will include public meetings where anyone can make suggestions, he added.

In a statement, Grassley said the commission’s mix of input is “important because some of the issues raised by my staff report apply to all charities, not just religious organizations.”

—Adelle M. Banks, *Religion News Service*

## Justice department backs Sikh inmate

The Justice Department has filed suit against California prison officials on behalf of a Sikh inmate who says his religious freedom was violated when officials punished him for not cutting his beard.

Sukhjinder Basra, incarcerated at the California Men’s Colony in San Luis Obispo on a drug offense, was punished for refusing to shave his beard in accordance with prison grooming policy.

The suit states that by requiring Basra to shave, the prison compelled him to rebel against his religious beliefs, a violation of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act.

“The freedom to practice one’s faith in peace is among our most cherished rights,” said Thomas Perez, assistant attorney general for the Civil Rights Division. “RLUIPA has proven to be a powerful tool in combating religious discrimination and ensuring religious freedom.”

RLUIPA became law in 2000 and defends the religious freedom of those in prisons, mental health facilities and state-run nursing homes.

Practitioners of Sikhism hold that cutting one’s hair violates God’s design.

—Richard Yeakley, *Religion News Service*

## Senate confirms religious freedom ambassador

WASHINGTON — A New York Baptist minister will soon fill the Obama administration’s long-vacant position to oversee international religious freedom after the Senate voted to confirm the Rev. Suzan Johnson Cook for the post.

A voice vote on April 14 positioned Cook to become the first female and the first African-American in the post after a lengthy and controversial nomination process.

“I am ... persuaded in my mind, heart, and soul that religious freedom is the birthright of all people everywhere; a foundation of civil society, a key to international security, and it must always be a pillar of U.S. foreign policy,” she said in a statement.

The independent U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom welcomed Cook as the third ambassador to oversee international religious liberty.

“We look forward to meeting her and working jointly toward our mutual goal of advancing freedom of religion or belief around the world,” said Leonard Leo, USCIRF chair.

—Adelle M. Banks, *Religion News Service*



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## REPORT from the Capital

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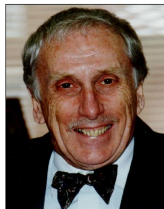
## The RLC Luncheon is next month!

Don't miss your chance to be a part of the Baptist Joint Committee's annual Religious Liberty Council Luncheon June 24 in Tampa, Fla. The event is being held in conjunction with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Religious Liberty Council  
Luncheon**  
**Friday, June 24**  
**11:30 a.m.**  
**Tampa Marriott Waterside  
Florida Ballroom IV-VI**  
**Tampa, Florida**

Get your tickets today to join us or help others attend by sponsoring a table as we celebrate 75 years of the BJC.

This year's keynote speaker is James M. Dunn, the Resident Professor of Christianity and Public Policy at Wake Forest University's School of Divinity. He was the executive director of the BJC from 1980-1999, and he has a career of service and leadership on religious liberty issues.



Dunn

Dunn will also receive the BJC's highest honor — the J.M. Dawson Religious Liberty Award — at the event.

The luncheon is an opportunity for you to fellowship with other BJC supporters, hear a compelling religious liberty message, meet seminary students and hear from BJC staff. Also, learn how to join the Religious Liberty Council, the individual membership organization of the BJC. Visit [www.BJCOnline.org/luncheon](http://www.BJCOnline.org/luncheon) for more information.

If you cannot make it to Tampa, you can still be part of the luncheon. Sponsor a table in honor of your church, favorite college or seminary and encourage others to be at the event. Or, you can purchase a ticket that we will give to a seminary student who would be unable to attend otherwise.

The event is open to the public, but tickets are required. Purchase tickets for \$35 each (a table of 10 is \$350) by check or credit card. Call our office at (202) 544-4226 or visit our secure online store by going to [www.BJCOnline.org/store](http://www.BJCOnline.org/store). If you have questions, please contact Cherilyn Crowe at [ccrowe@BJCOnline.org](mailto:ccrowe@BJCOnline.org).