

# REPORT

from the **Capital**

## White House releases guidelines for public/private partnerships

WASHINGTON — A new White House report that offers guidance on public/private partnerships between the government and faith-based groups leaves critical questions unanswered and does not resolve the issue of religious groups' ability to discriminate in hiring and firing, church-state watchdogs said.

The 50-page report, issued April 28, comes 18 months after President Barack Obama issued an executive order calling for more transparency as faith-based groups work with the government to meet social needs.

The report breaks little new ground but reaffirms that:

— A faith-based organization can provide federally funded social services without removing religious art, scriptures and symbols from their facilities.

— Explicitly religious activities can not be supported by federal funds but are permitted if they are funded privately and occur at a separate time and location from programs that receive government money.

— Beneficiaries who object to the religious character of a provider must be referred promptly to an alternative.

Joshua DuBois, director of the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, called the guidance "an important step" in implementing the recommendations from the President's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

"A diverse group of faith and non-profit leaders proposed ways to strengthen the government's relationship with faith-based organizations in a manner that protects religious liberty and the separation of church and state, and we are glad to move these recommendations forward," he said.

The report includes detailed exam-



ples on separating federally funded programs from privately funded religious activities, including distinct web pages and careful reporting of travel and use of electronic equipment.

Rabbi David Saperstein, who directs the Washington office of the Union for Reform Judaism and served on the Council, said the new guidance is "a great step forward," but he and others remain unsatisfied with the administration's apparent silence on addressing the ability of federally funded organizations to discriminate on the basis of religion when hiring or firing staff.

The White House has previously said the issue would be handled on a case-by-case basis and has resisted finalizing any formal policy.

"We do hope that the president will move expeditiously to ensure that no one is discriminated against when it comes to hiring with tax dollars," Saperstein said.

J. Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee, said he was glad to see progress being made.

Walker, who served on an official task force that advised the Council on ways to reform the faith-based office, said, "I applaud the president for continuing to refine the previous guidelines and implement our task force's recommendations for reform. But, this is another missed opportunity to

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# BJC, others urge end to religious profiling

WASHINGTON — The Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and 34 groups April 17 urged a Senate panel probing racial profiling in America to include profiling of religious minorities in their study.

The groups wrote leaders of a Senate Committee on the Judiciary subcommittee advising that religious profiling can be “used as a proxy for race, ethnicity, or national origin.”

“We appreciate that most law enforcement officials discharge their duties honorably,” the groups said. “Yet, when law enforcement profiles individuals and communities based solely on their real or perceived religion, religious appearance, religious observance, or religious practices, it undermines Americans’ trust in those sworn to protect them and our nation’s commitment to religious liberty and equal protection of the law. Furthermore, such actions not only have the effect of discriminating against religion generally and religious minorities in particular, but also fuel divisiveness by casting suspicion over an entire religious community.”

“Our religious freedom depends on our willingness to protect the religious freedom of others,” said K. Hollyn Hollman, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee. “Because of our Baptist history, we should understand the struggles of religious minorities and ensure that our government does not use differences in religious beliefs or practices

to target individuals.”

Welton Gaddy of the Interfaith Alliance also endorsed the letter. In written testimony to the panel, he said that the 9/11 attacks caused a “dramatic rise in the inappropriate profiling of Arabs, Muslims, Sikhs, and South Asians” in the United States.

“Religious profiling is not only a betrayal of the trust that American Muslims put in their government, but in the trust that *all* Americans put in their government,” said Gaddy, a Baptist minister. “To profile individuals simply because they belong, or appear to belong, to a particular religious community turns First Amendment-protected beliefs and activities into cause for suspicion and is an affront to the freedom of religion, paramount in our nation.”

In the letter, the organizations described religious freedom as “one of our most treasured liberties, a fundamental and defining feature of our national character.”

“Our Constitution guarantees that we are free to hold any religious belief, or none at all, and we are free to join together in communities to exercise those beliefs if we so choose,” the letter said. “As a result, the United States is among the most religious, and religiously diverse, nations in the world. Our diversity of faiths and beliefs is a great strength.”

— *Associated Baptist Press and BJC Staff Reports*

## Settlement ends Mojave cross dispute

After a legal battle spanning more than a decade, a settlement has paved the way for a cross to return to a hilltop in the Mojave National Preserve by transferring land from government to private ownership.

On April 23, a federal judge approved a settlement allowing the National Park Service to turn over an area of land in the Mojave Desert that previously displayed a cross to a post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. In exchange, the park service will receive five acres of donated property at a different location in the 1.6 million acre preserve in California.

A cross was first erected on the plot of land, known as Sunrise Rock, by a World War I veteran in 1934. Originally made of wood, it was later replaced with a cross made of steel pipes and maintained by the Veterans of Foreign Wars as a memorial to American soldiers who died in World War I. In 1994, the site became part of the Mojave National Preserve, meaning it was then on public land.

In 2001, Frank Buono, a Catholic and a retired National Park Service employee, filed suit, claiming the display of the Christian symbol on government land violated the First Amendment’s ban on government establishment of religion. Congress intervened with a series of actions including land transfers that effectively preserved the cross in the preserve. After a series of court decisions, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals invalidated the land transfer.

In 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down a 5-4 decision in the case (*Salazar v. Buono*), deciding only that the lower court was wrong to bar Congress’ transfer of a parcel of government-owned land to a private owner who would

maintain it, with the justices disagreeing over their reasons why. The case was sent back to the lower courts to re-evaluate previous injunctions. In the case, the BJC filed a friend-of-the-court brief defending Buono’s right to file the suit.

The cross, hidden by a wooden cover since 2002, remained standing. However, both the cover and then the cross were stolen days after the Supreme Court’s 2010 ruling. The park service later removed a replica cross erected at the site because that cross was not covered by the court decision.

This settlement will give Sunrise Rock to the Veterans Home of California-Barstow, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #385E. After the land swap is complete, the veterans will be permitted to restore a cross to the site. The National Park Service will put a fence around the site with entrances for visitors, post signs noting that it is private property and place a plaque on Sunrise Rock to describe the memorial commemorating American war veterans.

The National Park Service expects to complete the land exchange before the end of the year.

— *Cherilyn Crowe*



The cross at the center of the court battle stood on top of Sunrise Rock in California’s Mojave National Preserve.

Religion News Service photo

# REFLECTIONS

## Working from the wilderness

Greetings from the Baptist Joint Committee in exile!

In exile?

No, there has not been a coup. And, no, we have not left town for a foreign country. We are still on Capitol Hill, but we have recently left our familiar digs on the third floor of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Building — where we have been for nearly 50 years — and moved to temporary quarters one floor down, where we will be for the next three to four months.

Why? We are making way for our expanded, improved and altogether welcomed new quarters, a Center for Religious Liberty on Capitol Hill. Our time in exile is part of a journey that many of you began with us five years ago as the BJC marked its 70th anniversary. In 2007 we launched a capital campaign for the Center with an eye toward securing religious liberty for the future — continuing and expanding our work together. During the past five years, thanks to the determination of our donors and staff, we have continued to move closer to that goal.

Here's where things stand now.

We have negotiated a long-term lease, taking over the entire third floor (from 3,500 sq. ft. to 5,400 sq. ft.). The floor — including the 1950s vintage gypsum walls, linoleum floors and antiquated fixtures — will be gutted and the space completely rebuilt in accordance with plans for a carefully designed and efficiently laid out office space with room for expansion.

The BJC's strategic location has long been a major asset for the agency and our coalition efforts. The redesigned floor plan will take advantage of our impressive view of Capitol Hill. The new conference room will double our meeting space capacity and present a southwest corner view of the U.S. Supreme Court building and the U.S. Capitol dome two blocks away. The office design — with use of wood and glass, a smart layout and advanced interactive technology — will balance the needs of staff with the goal of providing visitors with meaningful exposure to the work of the organization. The new Center will contain cutting-edge technology, including a 70 inch interactive video screen and Skype conferencing.

All of this is integral to our commitment to keep the BJC at the leading edge of the fight for religious liberty and the separation of church and state in the nation's capital. The new Center

will improve the office environment and capacity for our work as we continue to file briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court, work with Congress and give advice to the administration. It also will result in a quantum leap forward in our ability to accommodate additional staff and visitors as we expand our education efforts. We will be able to host larger and more frequent groups of students, church members and clergy who visit our nation's capital for programs concerning the BJC's ministry. With an

enhanced focus on education, we will continue to produce new and improved resources, curriculum and literature — in printed form and online. We invite the opportunity to host you and your group at the Center for Religious Liberty when you visit Washington. We cherish the part of our work that allows us to describe to our supporters what we do in the most powerful city on the planet to protect religious freedom for the next generation.

As we work from our temporary offices and look forward to the culmination of the campaign, we are thankful for the more than 500 donors who contributed, bringing us closer to our vision. Each of those gifts, along with the gifts of our donors that sustain our budget, supports the BJC's mission to defend and extend religious liberty for all and inspires the staff daily.

We are not there yet, and we will continue to need and solicit help with this ambitious project — not just from those who have already given, but all of our supporters who have been kind enough to make gifts to the BJC's work to advance religious freedom for all.

In fact, later this summer you will have the opportunity to learn more about plans for the Center and become a part of this important effort. I hope you will respond with a glad heart and a generous check.

We anticipate returning from "exile" at the end of the summer and look forward to many more years of much-needed advocacy for religious liberty and the separation of church and state, providing a strong Baptist witness to those values and principles.



J. Brent Walker  
Executive Director

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"The new Center will improve the office environment and capacity for our work as we continue to file briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court, work with Congress and give advice to the administration. It also will result in a quantum leap forward in our ability to accommodate additional staff and visitors as we expand our education efforts."

# Shurden Lectures explore America

## Lambert: America is both religious and secular, sometimes

MACON, GA — Strong defense of the separation of church and state and religious liberty is necessary today because of the false claims of so-called evangelical historians and their concerted effort to re-write history said Purdue University history professor Frank Lambert in a series of lectures sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee April 17-18 on the Mercer University campus.

Lambert's three presentations, comprising the annual Walter B. and Kay W. Shurden Lectures on Religious Liberty and Separation of Church and State, addressed three claims made by the "ultra conservative, highly partisan sectarians" that play the role of historians.

"They have all the answers. No historical examination is necessary," Lambert said in a mocking tone.

The claims made by the evangelical "historians" include that America was founded as a Christian nation by Christian men on Christian principles; secular ideas and concerns are disregarded as having any role. Second, modern-day liberals and secularists, especially academic historians, are the ones who have distorted the place of religion in American society. Third, partisan sectarian "historians" claim that the separation of church and state is a myth created by liberals and secularists because it is not in the Constitution.

Lambert said these authors of bad history include Tim LaHaye, David Barton, William Federer and John Eidsmoe. "Rather than being historians, these are partisans. And when they write, they write as partisans, not historians who are trying to understand and explain history in context," he said.

Lambert said the evangelical "historians" make the case for the United States as a Christian nation by finding every possible quote that has anything to do with religion said by people they regard as the nation's founders. They claim incorrectly that delegates to the Constitutional Convention were guided by the Bible and by the Puritan model of a "city upon a hill,"

Lambert said. In fact, at the convention, the delegates granted Congress no power over religion. That does not mean, however, that the delegates thought religion was unimportant, Lambert said.

"They thought religion should be lodged in the hands of the people and it ought to be put on a voluntary basis. It should not be a department of state," he said.

Lambert then described an example of a Christian state conceived in America — the Christian commonwealth in Massachusetts Bay Colony.

He said the colony was designed around the principle of religious uniformity. They were substituting their Puritan religious beliefs for the uniformity of the Church of England.

In Massachusetts Bay Colony, Scripture was the blueprint of the society for politics and economics, and church and state were separated but closely interrelated. Lambert said sovereignty rested with "visible saints" who were the only ones who could vote or hold office in civil society.

Lambert said there was much to admire about the colony because it was a society knitted by love; it promoted education; and because of the Puritan work ethic, it prospered. It eventually failed because of a clash between uniformity and dissent.

In his second lecture, Lambert described a society polarized in many different ways, including over the place of religion in American public life.

"On the one hand are those from the far religious right who think that everything ought to be phrased in religious language. They deny any kind of secular influence and they blame secularists for undermining religion and religious freedom," Lambert said. "On the other hand are secularists who want to deny that religion has played an important part in American history, which is equally ridiculous and distorted."

Borrowing a construction from author George Marsden, Lambert described American society as both religious and secular. Sometimes they are in tension, even in tension within individuals, he said.

Lambert said American society often takes a view of "either/or" history. "History does not work that way — it is both/and," he said. Also, he said, religious people have claimed that the nation has lost its way and on the opposite side, there are secularists who claim that the world's problems are always about religion.

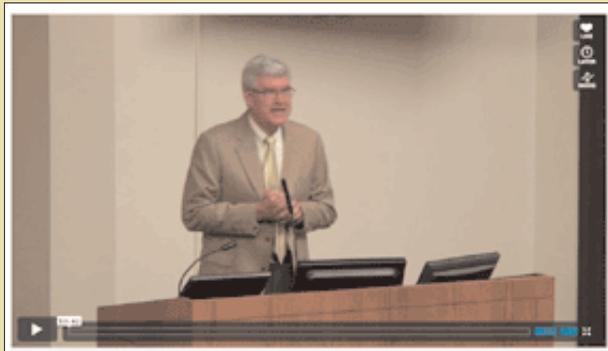
To comprehend the secular/sacred tension and even science and faith, Lambert said an understanding of the two most transformative intellectual currents that flowed through America in the 18th century is necessary — The Great Awakening, which was a religious revival, and Enlightenment.

Both The Great Awakening and Enlightenment challenged traditional thought, challenged received wisdom and centered on individual experience, Lambert said.

The Great Awakening was based on a simple message. "There was 'one thing needful,' a spiritual new birth," Lambert said. It introduced religious choice in America, bring-

### Watch the lectures online!

All three of Frank Lambert's presentations are available to watch on the Baptist Joint Committee's Vimeo page. Visit [Vimeo.com/BJCvideos](http://Vimeo.com/BJCvideos) or use your mobile device to scan the QR code on the right.



# can history times in tension

ing unity but also dividing Christians.

At the same time in the 18th century, the Enlightenment refused to believe that things are the way they are in the world simply because God wanted it that way, Lambert said.

In his third lecture, Lambert focused on the convention of 1787 that drafted the U.S. Constitution. Lambert asserted that Americans tend to view the convention reverentially through a popular constructed memory of the past, but historical facts are always a bit different than the myths we create about ourselves.

The delegates were gifted and far-sighted people, Lambert said, but they were also fully human. "Principled, yes," Lambert said, "but also protecting private interests and special interests, just like we do today."

James Madison made sure the principle of separation was at the heart of the Constitution, according to Lambert. Not only did the document separate the three branches of government, but it also separated power of the central government from the states and it kept a separation of church and state without using those exact words.

The delegates at the convention in 1787 were aware of the religious landscape in America. The majority of men were professing Christians, but few spoke publicly of Jesus or Christ and would have disagreed on biblical interpretation. They saw the dizzying religious diversity growing in America, but the last thing they wanted to do in Philadelphia was fight over religion. "In essence," Lambert said, "they ignored religion as much as they possibly could."

The delegates believed in freedom of conscience and religious liberty — not mere toleration, but true religious liberty. "What they did with that conviction of religious liberty ended up in the most radical part of the U.S. Constitution, and that is the separation of church and state," Lambert said.

Lambert said the delegates feared the intermingling of church and state. "The delegates for the most part were well-read, and they knew history. And they knew what happened when church and state were conjoined, and they thought that damage was done to both," Lambert said. "So, they saw throughout history the unholy bargain of priest and king, of church and state, and they did not want anything to do with that." This led them to largely ignore the religious landscape of America at the convention.

Lambert pointed out that religion was barely mentioned during their discussions. It came up only twice: once in a heated debate over the election of Congress when Benjamin Franklin made a motion to pray — which failed — and again during the debate over the question of religious tests for officeholders. According to Lambert, the delegates' decision to include a prohibition on such a test created a country that separated church and civil authority, leaving religion to the states and to individuals.

Lambert concluded with James Madison's reflections on America near the end of his life. Madison noted that churches were numerous and that all religious views were expressed "with an energy unheard of where there was an established



During the Shurden Lectures, Purdue professor Frank Lambert made presentations from the Mercer Medical School Auditorium (above) and in Newton Chapel (below), both on the campus of Mercer University in Macon, Ga. (Photos: Mercer University)



In 2004, Dr. Kay W. Shurden (second from right), and Dr. Walter B. Shurden (far right) made a gift to the BJC to establish an annual lectureship on the issues of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. The presentations allow BJC staff, including General Counsel K. Hollyn Hollman (far left) and Executive Director J. Brent Walker (third from right) to interact with professors and students on college campuses across the country. Also pictured are Purdue history professor Dr. Frank Lambert (second from left) and Mrs. Beth Lambert (third from left). (Photo: Mercer University)

church that enjoyed state support."

"So, in Madison's view," Lambert said, "separation of church and state worked for the benefit of the spread of the Gospel."

—Jeff Huett

# Case illustrates church-state questions in public/private partnerships

Across the country, churches and other religiously affiliated entities are engaged in community service. In many communities, religious organizations are uniquely positioned to provide effective social services. In some instances, they do so in cooperation with government. Religious entities can and do compete for government funding to provide secular social services. Because such collaboration involves taxpayer dollars, important legal considerations come into play. These partnerships can enjoy great success, but they must also meet constitutional standards that require separation of church and state. A recent case in a Massachusetts federal district court illustrates the Establishment Clause concerns that arise when private organizations impose religious restrictions in a tax-funded program. The case, *ACLU of Massachusetts v. Sebelius*, arose in the context of federal legislation intended to assist victims of human trafficking.

Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in 2000 to address the problem of domestic human trafficking, considered to be a form of modern-day slavery. Congressional findings noted that traffickers primarily target women and girls, who are usually trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation including prostitution, commercial pornography, rape and other abuses. Among other things, the legislation directed the U.S. Health and Human Services Department (HHS) and other agencies to “expand benefits and services to victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons in the United States,” and it appropriated funding for that purpose.

For several years, HHS carried out this directive by making grants to individual nonprofit service providers, but the agency later decided to select a general contractor to administer the funding. It sought and received proposals from prospective contractors, including the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). During the bidding process, USCCB made clear that if selected by HHS it would not permit grant funds to subsidize victim services that it considered “contrary to [its] moral convictions or religious beliefs.” Specifically, USCCB stated that neither it nor its subcontractors could use contract funds to provide or refer clients for abortion services or contraceptive materials.

Because, as the TVPA recognized, most human trafficking involves female victims subjected to severe physical and sexual abuse, access to comprehensive reproductive health services is highly relevant to achieving stated TVPA goals such as victim rehabilitation, safety, and future self-sufficiency. Indeed, TVPA grants had pre-



By Nan Futrell  
BJC Staff Counsel

viously supported a range of victim services that included contraceptives and referrals for abortion and contraceptive services. Still, religious restriction notwithstanding, HHS awarded the contract to USCCB in 2006 and renewed it annually until it expired in October 2011. Over

that period, USCCB allegedly received more than \$15 million from HHS, and distributed the money to more than 100 service providers. All subcontracts, as well as subcontractor operating manuals and other staff instructions, included the USCCB’s restriction on services.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts sued the government, alleging that federal officials improperly delegated its statutory authority to USCCB, resulting in religious restrictions on public funding. This, the ACLU argued, led to unconstitutional endorsement and advancement of religion and created excessive government entanglement with religion. For its part, USCCB pointed to the fact that nothing in the TVPA or formal HHS policy required service providers to cover abortion or contraception, and it maintained that no trafficking victim had complained about the lack of funding for those services under the government contract.

The district court concluded that the HHS-USCCB contract violated the Establishment Clause as a matter of law. The court emphasized that outside the contract, HHS had authorized TVPA funding to pay for the services USCCB refused to cover. According to the court, allowing USCCB to exclude certain (otherwise available) services from government funding for solely religious reasons led to a symbolic — and unconstitutional — union of church and state.

In the wake of the district court opinion, which USCCB plans to appeal, headlines on both sides of the case painted starkly different interpretations of the court’s holding. The ACLU called it a decision prohibiting religious restrictions on a government program, while USCCB characterized it as concluding that the U.S. Constitution forbids religious accommodation. The disagreement is more than semantic. As in the context of religious discrimination in hiring for federally funded positions, tough questions remain about how the government can partner with private religious entities in ways that meet pressing social needs while respecting the constitutional boundaries that separate church and state.

*The “Hollman Report” will return in next month’s Report from the Capital.*

## Christians mark National Day of Prayer, atheists host National Day of Reason

WASHINGTON—Americans marked the National Day of Prayer May 3, with Christians gathering on Capitol Hill to defend their right to pray as nonbelievers observed a “Day of Reason.”



Shirley Dobson, wife of Focus on the Family founder James Dobson and the chairwoman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, said the total of 40,000 observances across the United States for the National Day of Prayer “belies the fact of many skeptics saying that citizens in our nation no longer believe in prayer.” The task force is a self-funded private organization that organizes an event on the National Day of Prayer each year in Washington, D.C., and other events across the country. According to the National Day of Prayer Task Force’s website, its efforts “are executed specifically in accordance with its Judeo-Christian beliefs.”

The American Humanist Association used the day to mark the National Day of Reason, and encouraged atheists, agnostics and nonbelievers to give blood or participate in counter demonstrations.

The annual observance on Capitol Hill featured more than three hours of worship and prayer for the nation’s leaders and the military. But when it came time to pray for the executive branch, Bishop Harry Jackson, a Maryland megachurch pastor, critiqued the Obama administration for not defending the Defense of Marriage Act and urged prayer for “clarity of mission.”

The White House did not send a representative to speak at the gathering, but as has been his practice, President Barack Obama issued a proclamation to mark the prayer day.

“On this National Day of Prayer, we give thanks for our democracy that respects the beliefs and protects the religious freedom of all people to pray, worship, or abstain according to the dictates of their conscience,” Obama said in his proclamation of the day, which was enacted into law in 1952.

Shin Inouye, a White House spokesman, said the president celebrates “prayer and faith through events like his recent Easter Prayer Breakfast” and “prays daily and deeply appreciates the important role that prayer plays in the lives of millions of Americans.”

The Baptist Joint Committee has stated that Congress’ official designation and the president’s proclamation of a National Day of Prayer are misguided and unnecessary. A day of prayer is more appropriately called for by our religious leaders — not civil magistrates, Congress or even the president, according to the BJC.

—Religion News Service and Staff Reports

## New York transit authority scraps logo requirement

New York City’s transportation authority announced it will drop a policy that required Muslim and Sikh employees to put the agency’s logo on their religious headgear, according to the *New York Daily News*.

The paper reports that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has tentatively agreed to revise its dress code so that no logo will be required on items worn on the head, but any headwear has to be blue, matching the transit workers’ official uniforms. This change would settle a federal lawsuit challenging the MTA’s logo requirement.

In the wake of 9/11, the MTA began requiring its logos on religious head coverings, including Sikh turbans and Muslim headscarves. According to reports in 2009, the transit authority claimed they were concerned about riders not being able to recognize whether an individual was an official MTA worker. Standard uniforms have at least three other MTA logos visible, according to NBC New York.

“I think this ends a very troubling chapter in the history of the MTA,” said Amardeep Singh, a lawyer representing six Sikh subway workers, to the *New York Daily News*.

—Cherilyn Crowe

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### GUIDELINES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

address the hiring issue. It’s simply wrong for the government to subsidize religious discrimination.”

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, also welcomed the report’s safeguards, but he said loopholes remain.

“This guidance makes some significant improvements to the Bush faith-based initiative, but it falls far short of what it ought to do,” said Lynn, who also served on the task force charged with reform of the faith-based office.

The report includes a true-and-false questionnaire to train individuals working most closely with programs at the intersection of government and religion. Among its statements:

— “Recipients of Federal funds, including State and local governments, cannot discriminate in the provision of program services on the basis of religion.” (True.)

— “There is no money set aside by the Federal government for faith-based organizations to receive a designated portion of awards in Federal social services.” (True.)

— “Federal funds can be used to buy religious materials as long as the materials are used in a social service program serving the needy.” (False.)

—Religion News Service and Staff Reports



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- National Baptist Convention of America
- National Baptist Convention U.S.A. Inc.
- National Missionary Baptist Convention
- North American Baptist Conference
- Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc.
- Religious Liberty Council
- Seventh Day Baptist General Conference

## REPORT from the Capital

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## The Religious Liberty Council 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 22 in Fort Worth, Texas. The event, held in conjunction with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly, is open to the public, but you must have a ticket to attend.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Religious Liberty Council Luncheon**  
**Friday, June 22**  
**11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.**  
**Omni Fort Worth Hotel**  
**Texas Ballroom F**  
**Fort Worth, Texas**

Get your tickets today and plan to join us in Fort Worth, or help others attend the luncheon by sponsoring a table or donating a ticket to a seminary student. Tickets are available for \$40 each, and a table of 10 is \$400. To purchase tickets, call our office at 202-544-4226 or visit our secure website at [BJConline.org/store](http://BJConline.org/store).

This year's keynote speaker is Bill J. Leonard, who was recently named the James and Marilyn Dunn Chair of Baptist Studies at the Wake Forest University School of Divinity. Leonard

is a scholar of church history and an ordained Baptist minister. He has dedicated much of his career to the study of Baptist history and was the founding dean of the Wake Forest University School of Divinity. After retiring as dean in 2010, he has continued to teach church history at Wake Forest. Leonard will also receive the BJC's highest honor — the J.M. Dawson Religious Liberty Award — at the event.



**Leonard**

The Religious Liberty Council 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 and board members. Come be a part of the Religious Liberty Council, the individual membership organization of the Baptist Joint Committee.

For more information about the event, visit [BJConline.org/luncheon](http://BJConline.org/luncheon) or contact Cherilyn Crowe at 202-544-4226 or [ccrowe@BJConline.org](mailto:ccrowe@BJConline.org).