

June 5, 2017

Rep. Edward Royce
2310 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Royce,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Eliot Engel
2462 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Engel,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Jeff Duncan
2229 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Duncan,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Ted Poe
2132 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Poe,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher
2300 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Rohrabacher,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
2206 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Ros-Lehtinen,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Christopher Smith
2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Smith,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Ted Yoho
511 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Yoho,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Karen Bass
2241 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Bass,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Theodore Deutch
2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Deutch,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. William Keating
2351 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Keating,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Gregory Meeks
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Meeks,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Brad Sherman
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Sherman,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Albio Sires
2342 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Sires,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Ami Bera
1431 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Bera,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Brendan Boyle
1133 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Boyle,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Mo Brooks
2400 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Brooks,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Joaquin Castro
1221 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Castro,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Steve Chabot
2371 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Chabot,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Gerald Connolly
2238 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Connolly,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Paul Cook
1222 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Cook,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Ron DeSantis
1524 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative DeSantis,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Daniel Donovan
1541 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Donovan,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Adriano Espaillat
1630 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Espaillat,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick
514 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Fitzpatrick,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Lois Frankel
1037 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Frankel,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Tulsi Gabbard
1433 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Gabbard,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Thomas Garrett
415 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Garrett,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Darrell Issa
2269 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Issa,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Robin Kelly
1239 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Kelly,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Adam Kinzinger
2245 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Kinzinger,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Ted Lieu
236 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Lieu,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Tom Marino
2242 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Marino,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Brian Mast
2182 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Mast,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Michael McCaul
2001 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative McCaul,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Mark Meadows
1024 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Meadows,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Scott Perry
1207 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Perry,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Francis Rooney
120 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Rooney,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Bradley Schneider
1432 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Schneider,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. F. Sensenbrenner
2449 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Sensenbrenner,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Thomas Suozzi
226 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Suozzi,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Dina Titus
2464 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Titus,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Norma Torres
1713 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Torres,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Ann Wagner
435 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Wagner,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Joe Wilson
1436 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Wilson,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh

June 5, 2017

Rep. Lee Zeldin
1517 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1805

Dear Representative Zeldin,

The undersigned faith-based, nontheist, and religious freedom advocacy organizations, as well as individuals involved with religious freedom advocacy, write in support of H. Res. 349, a bi-partisan international religious freedom resolution recently introduced by Reps. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Alex Mooney (R-WV), David Cicilline (D-RI), and John Culberson (R-TX).

This resolution calls upon the President and the U.S. State Department to make the repeal of blasphemy laws a priority in their relationships with countries that have such laws. In addition, this resolution encourages the President and the State Department to oppose any efforts at the United Nations or other international forums to support blasphemy laws, or any attempts to expand the international norm on incitement to include blasphemy or defamation of religions.

Blasphemy laws are the most explicit laws banning the expression of doubts or criticism regarding religion, and various countries employ them to ban criticism of religious beliefs, symbols, and figures. In several countries, the penalty for violating these laws is as severe as death. These laws harm not just the nonreligious, but dissidents in all religious sects.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, the Christian governor of Jakarta, Indonesia, was recently convicted by a panel of five judges that ruled he had insulted Islam. As a result, he was sentenced on May 9, 2017, to two years in jail. Basuki was unable to continue his position as governor of Jakarta and was replaced by his deputy.

Salmaan Taseer, the Muslim governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, was killed in 2011 by his own bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, after he criticized Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shaan Taseer, the son of Salmaan, is himself now the target of a police case and a fatwa calling for his killing after he recorded a message criticizing the country's blasphemy law.

Prakash Kumar, a Hindu resident of Pakistan, was arrested on May 3, 2017 after locals complained he allegedly posted blasphemous content online. Police have begun a criminal investigation into Kumar, and a local court has sent him to jail for further interrogation. Unfortunately, a mob gathered outside the police station where Kumar was being held and demanded that he be handed over to them. When law enforcement refused, the crowd turned violent, and in the ensuing violence a teenager was killed.

Raif Badawi, an advocate for freedom of religion, belief, and expression, was arrested and charged on June 17, 2012 with insulting Islam and blasphemy. On July 29, 2013, a criminal court sentenced Badawi to seven years in jail and 600 lashes. On May 7, 2014, a Saudi court issued a new sentence for Raif: 10 years in prison, 1,000 lashes, and a fine equivalent to \$267,000. On January 9, 2015, Saudi authorities gave Badawi the first 50 of his 1,000 lashes, and in June 2015 Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison.

These are just some of the many cases of individuals who have been affected by blasphemy laws. Thankfully, Congress has the unique ability to promote international religious freedom on the global stage and to encourage governments of countries where religious and non-religious rights are not respected to remedy the situation. **As such, the undersigned groups urge you to co-sponsor this important resolution, and support its passage should it come to the House floor or a committee on which you serve.**

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century Wilberforce Initiative
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Bleeding for Belief
Center for Inquiry
Center for Pluralism
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations
Hindu American Foundation
Human Rights Without Frontiers International (Brussels)
International Institute for Religious Freedom
Jubilee Campaign USA
Religious Freedom Institute
Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America
Secular Coalition for America
Union for Reform Judaism
World Muslim Congress

INDIVIDUALS

C. Nasser Ahmed

Kate Davidson
The Mitchell Firm

Patricia Duval
Human Rights Attorney

Willy Fautre
Without Frontiers International

Dr. Joel C. Hunter
Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Paul Marshall
Wilson Professor of Religious Freedom
Baylor University

Loay Mikhael
The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council

Scott Morgan
International Religious Freedom Roundtable Working Group on Africa

Timothy Shah
Religious Freedom Institute

William C. Walsh
Bisceglie and Walsh