1 ENGROSSED HOUSE
BILL NO. 2648   By: Hill, Echols, Hardin
2   (David), Townley, Burns,
                                    Steagall, Crosswhite Hader,
3   West (Kevin), Cornwell,
                                    Caldwell (Chad), Kendrix,
4   Dills, Grego, Boles,
                                    Conley, Gann, Mize, Stark,
5   Russ, Roberts (Eric),
                                    Roberts (Sean), McDugle,
6   Caldwell (Trey), Bashore,
                                    Wolfley, Moore, West
7   (Tammy), Miller, Smith,
                                    Dempsey, Baker, Lepak,
8   McCall, Sims, Lawson,
                                    Williams, Roe, Humphrey,
9   O'Donnell, Phillips and
                                    Manger of the House
10
                                            and
11
                                    Bullard of the Senate
12

13

14   An Act relating to officers; amending 51 O.S. 2011,
          Section 253, which relates to the free exercise of
15   religion; prohibiting any governmental entity from
          closing any place of worship during an emergency; and
16   providing an effective date.

17

18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

19   SECTION 1.   AMENDATORY   51 O.S. 2011, Section 253, is

20 amended to read as follows:

21   Section 253. A. Except as provided in subsection B of this

22 section, no governmental entity shall substantially burden a

23 person's free exercise of religion even if the burden results from a

24 rule of general applicability.

B. No governmental entity shall substantially burden a person's free exercise of religion unless it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is:

1. Essential to further a compelling governmental interest; and

2. The least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest.

C. Any order or rule issued by any governmental entity pursuant to an emergency that requires closure of any place of worship entitled to the religious exemption found in Section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code shall be considered a substantial burden even if the order or rule is one of general applicability.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2021.

Passed the House of Representatives the 3rd day of March, 2021.

_____
Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the ___ day of _____, 2021.

_____
Presiding Officer of the Senate