

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 58th Legislature (2021)

4 HOUSE BILL 2648

By: **Hill, Echols, Hardin**
(David), Townley and Burns

5
6
7 AS INTRODUCED

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

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

14 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 51 O.S. 2011, Section 253, is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 Section 253. A. Except as provided in subsection B of this
17 section, no governmental entity shall substantially burden a
18 person's free exercise of religion even if the burden results from a
19 rule of general applicability.

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

23 1. Essential to further a compelling governmental interest; and
24

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

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

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

9
10 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON STATES RIGHTS, dated 02/03/2021 -
11 DO PASS, As Coauthored.

12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24