

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 58th Legislature (2021)

3 HOUSE BILL 2648

By: Echols

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5
6 AS INTRODUCED

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

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

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

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

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

- 22 1. Essential to further a compelling governmental interest; and
23 2. The least restrictive means of furthering that compelling
24 governmental interest.

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

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

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8 58-1-6475 AB 01/06/21
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