

Christians Find Themselves on Both Sides of Tennessee Bible Bill

It's still unclear how Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam will respond to a bill sent to his desk Monday, but if he signs it into law, it would make his state the first to declare the Bible its "Official Book."

Haslam has said he has deep concerns about the bill, both as a Christian, and as an elected leader who swore an oath to both his state's constitution and the U.S. Constitution. His conflicted views on the bill were shared by a number of legislators who spoke Monday during a final, 30-minute debate in the Tennessee Senate.

See the entire debate by clicking [here](#) (advance to the 1:56:00 mark).

"The very founding of our nation—the very form of government that we have today—was put forth by men of faith, based on their faith, based on what they read in Holy Scripture," Sen. Kerry Roberts (R-Springfield) said. "This book has done more to bring us to where we are today than any other book in the history of mankind."

According to *The Tennessean* newspaper, he ultimately voted in favor of the bill.

"I understand that it's hard to vote against the Bible—no one wants to do that," Sen. Jeff Yarbrow (D-Nashville) said. "We have an obligation to follow the Constitution."

Sen. Steve Southerland (R-Morristown), the bill's sponsor, noted the Bible printing industry brings millions of dollars a year to the state. Ultimately, the bill passed by a 19-8

margin with five senators not voting.

A spokesman for Haslam told *The Tennessean* the governor didn't think the bill was very respectful. Haslam is an elder at Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church in Knoxville.