

Presidential Candidates Asked to Sign Religious Freedom Pledge

The 2012 presidential elections could open the door for discussions about persecuted Christians and people of all faiths worldwide.

Open Doors USA has partnered with professor Tom Farr of Georgetown University, an International Religious Freedom (IRF) expert, to produce and promote the Presidential Pledge for Religious Freedom.

Open Doors USA is presenting the pledge to presidential candidates—including Republican, Democratic, Libertarian and independent—asking each of them to sign it. Former Sen. Rick Santorum is the first candidate to sign the pledge.

“Religious freedom is foundational to American society, and a key indicator of prosperity in most societies worldwide,” says Open Doors USA Advocacy Director Lindsay Vessey. “Candidates need to hear from American voters that this is an important issue. We’re asking all freedom-loving Americans to sign the petition. This petition indicates that you would like your presidential candidate to sign the Presidential Pledge for Religious Freedom.”

A candidate’s signature indicates that he or she commits to upholding religious freedom for people of all faiths in America, nominating U.S. federal judges who are committed to upholding religious freedom as defined in the pledge and prioritizing religious freedom concerns in U.S. foreign policy. The complete pledge can be accessed at [.](#)

Open Doors will approach candidates, informing them how many Americans have signed the petition. This will help them

understand that the public cares about religious freedom and wants our president to protect and promote it.

Farr says tens of millions of human beings are subject to violent persecution because of their beliefs or those of their tormentors. As he sees it, whoever wins the presidency in 2012 should make religious freedom, at home and abroad, a high priority.

“Religious freedom is in global crisis,” Farr says. “In the United States, religious associations are at risk of being forced either to abandon their core beliefs—for example, on the sanctity of human life—or cease operation. Internationally, 70 percent of the world’s population lives in countries in which religious freedom is severely restricted.”