

Voters in This State Will Decide Fate of Ten Commandments

In many states, counties and cities across the country, Ten Commandments monuments have been erected to commemorate the Judeo-Christian roots of natural and common law in America.

And as the battle over the imagined separation of Church and State is waged by secularists, Christians have found those monuments increasingly under attack. One such example is the Ten Commandments Monument that once stood on the grounds of the State Capitol in Oklahoma City.

The Oklahoma Capitol Preservation Commission voted 7-1 last September to remove the monument after the The American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma told the court that the monument was unconstitutional. It argued that because the Oklahoma Constitution states that public property cannot be used to promote a "church denomination or system of religion," the monument must be removed.

It was removed in October. But that wasn't the end of the fight. The monument's removal angered many Oklahomans, particularly Republican lawmakers who vowed to return the monument to state property.

The Oklahoma House of Representatives voted 65-7 late Thursday for a resolution calling for a statewide vote on whether to remove a constitutional prohibition on the use of state funds or property to support a religion. The bill was sponsored by state Rep. John Paul Jordan (R-Yukon), an attorney.

"Since the Oklahoma Supreme Court's decision in June regarding the Ten Commandments monument, my constituents wanted to know what could be done," he said. "I knew it would be a difficult

proposition to undo the ruling, so we looked at giving voters the opportunity to remove the basis for the ruling.”

Voters in Oklahoma will now decide the fate of the monument themselves by voting on a constitutional amendment in the November election. ACLU Oklahoma’s Executive Director Ryan Kiesel accused GOP lawmakers of using the monument as a political gimmick, saying his organization would challenge the monument again if it re-installed.