

Florida House Approves Religious Funding Ban Appeal

The Florida Constitution has a ban on spending public funds to help religious organizations. But that could soon change. The Florida House this week approved a proposed amendment that would repeal the ban.

Scott Plakon, a representative in Florida House District 37 who sponsored the bill, told Charisma News that the legislation passed by about a two to one margin. Specifically, the Florida House voted 81-35 on proposal HJR 1471.

Before the vote, Plakon explained to Charisma News that the funding ban dates back to the 19th century and represents anti-Catholic prejudice.

"This bill is simply about righting a wrong that happened in our state 126 years ago," the Associated Press reported Plakon as saying after the vote. "At the time Protestants thought they could get away with using our state constitution to treat Catholics differently. It was sinful what we did."

Not surprisingly, Republicans unanimously voted on the bill. Three Democrats also gave the nod to a repeal on using public funds to help religious organizations.

Now, the Florida Senate will vote on the bill. If the bill doesn't get signed into law, voucher programs that pave the way for low-income students and students with disabilities to attend private schools, including religious schools, could be stalled. Public dollars going to religious hospitals could also be cut off.