

Teens Threatened With Arrest for Praying—in America!

It's hard to believe American teenagers could be arrested for delivering a prayer, but that's the kind of nation we live in—a nation that was fundamentally transformed by the **previous presidential administration**.

In 2011, the class president at Hampton High School in Tennessee wanted to deliver a pray at graduation. The principal issued an edict that any child who attempted to pray would be stopped, escorted from the building by police and arrested.

That incident was one of dozens included in a stunning new Family Research Council report documenting a significant upsurge in government hostility to religion.

Since 2014 there has been a 76 percent increase in religious freedom violations, according to **“Hostility to Religion: The Growing Threat to Religious Liberty in America.”**

“The recent spike in government-driven religious hostility is sad, but not surprising, especially considering the Obama administration's antagonism toward biblical Christianity,” Family Research Council president Tony Perkins said.

Perkins said the 66-page report underscores the legitimacy of the actions taken by President Trump to end polices in federal agencies that “fan the flames of this religious intolerance.”

“This report is designed to quantify the threat to our First [Amendment] freedom and to challenge Americans to use their God-given freedoms to protect these freedoms we enjoy as Americans,” Perkins said.

Even though there is an increase in hostility, there is some

good news.

Perkins noted “the growing courage of Christians, especially young Christians, to defend both their faith and their freedoms.”

That’s one of the reasons I wrote ***The Deplorables’ Guide to Making America Great Again***. I wanted to provide Americans with a handbook on how they can restore traditional values to their communities.

Among the cases listed in the report:

- An 11-year-old student in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, was penalized for mentioning Jesus in a Christmas poetry assignment.
- Principal Frank Lay and Athletic Director Robert Freedom were charged with criminal contempt because they prayed over a meal. The pair was later found not guilty of violating an injunction banning the promotion of religious events at school.
- A Christian acapella group at James Madison University was told they could not perform “Mary Did You Know” because it was religious. They were directed to sing only secular songs.
- An Ohio library banned a Christian group from meeting to discuss natural marriage unless the group also included supports of same-sex marriage.
- Allstate Insurance Company fired a staffer for allegedly using a company laptop to write a column against homosexuality. The company alleged said the column violated its diversity standards.
- San Diego firefighters were threatened with disciplinary action if they refused to participate in a gay pride parade. The firefighters were subjected to verbal abuse and sexual gestures during the parade.
- A woman who rented out rooms in her home was sued after she refused to rent to a same-sex couple.

- An Oklahoma bank was forced to remove religious Christmas decorations under orders from the Federal Reserve.

Travis Weber, FRC's director of the Center for Religious Liberty, said he hopes the report will be a wake-up call for people of faith.

"In a society like ours, we must be the guardians of our own freedom," he said. "Anyone who desires freedom in the future must take note of what these trends tell us about our freedom right now—relative to where we have come from—in order to protect freedom from going forward." {eoa}