
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL MOCK
TRIAL CHAMPIONSHIP TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS OF ALL RELIGIOUS
FAITHS.

1 WHEREAS, religious intolerance and discrimination continue
2 to be the root causes of many of the conflicts around the world;
3 and

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5 WHEREAS, the United States of America was founded by those
6 seeking to practice their religion freely, and the American
7 justice system, including all legal professionals involved,
8 should be working to uphold this principle; and

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10 WHEREAS, the National High School Mock Trial Championship
11 has been, until this date, a prestigious event that requires a
12 tremendous amount of preparation, skill, and dedication on
13 behalf of those students who are competing, and is looked upon
14 with distinction by institutions of higher learning; and

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16 WHEREAS, the National High School Mock Trial Championship
17 is a program based on constitutional law; and

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19 WHEREAS, the National High School Mock Trial Championship
20 espouses the goals of heightening "appreciation of the principle
21 of equal justice for all" and promoting the "exchange of ideas
22 among students from throughout the United States"; and

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24 WHEREAS, the Torah Academy of Bergen County of Teaneck, New
25 Jersey, won the 2005 New Jersey State Bar Foundation High School
26 tournament, and was eligible to compete in the National High
27 School Mock Trial Championship; and

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29 WHEREAS, the members of the mock trial team from Torah
30 Academy observe the Sabbath, in accordance with their practice
31 of Orthodox Judaism, and would not have been able to participate



1 in any National High School Mock Trial Championship competitions
2 from sundown on Friday through sundown on Saturday without
3 certain accommodations; and
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5 WHEREAS, satisfactory accommodations were made to allow
6 Torah Academy of Teaneck, New Jersey, to compete during the last
7 National High School Mock Trial Championship held in Charlotte,
8 North Carolina, from May 5-7, 2005, without violating the
9 religious practices of the students; and
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11 WHEREAS, a review of the post-host report compiled after
12 the 2005 Championship showed a majority of the comments
13 supported the accommodations made for the Torah Academy students
14 and the benefit of competing with the Torah Academy students;
15 and
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17 WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the National High School
18 Mock Trial Championship voted on October 15, 2005, to refuse any
19 future accommodations for students who observe Sabbath on Friday
20 and/or Saturday; and
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22 WHEREAS, students who have otherwise met all of the
23 criteria to participate in the qualifying competitions leading
24 to the National High School Mock Trial Championship should be
25 able to compete regardless of their religious affiliation; and
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27 WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey State Bar
28 Foundation unanimously voted at its October 27, 2005, meeting
29 that New Jersey will not compete in the National High School
30 Mock Trial Championship unless the National Board establishes a
31 policy permitting accommodation for religious observance; and
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33 WHEREAS, on January 6, 2006, the North Carolina Academy of
34 Trial Lawyers also officially withdrew from participating in the
35 National High School Mock Trial Championship because the
36 National Board would not make changes to the competition's
37 schedule to accommodate students with religious restrictions;
38 and
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40 WHEREAS, the decision of the Board of Directors of the
41 National High School Mock Trial Championship to refuse any
42 future accommodations for students who observe their Sabbath on
43 Friday and/or Saturday adversely and wrongly impacts observant
44 Jewish, Muslim, and Seventh-Day Adventist students; and



1 WHEREAS, the decision made by the Board of Directors of the
2 National High School Mock Trial Championship is inconsistent
3 with American principles of religious freedom and equal
4 protection; now, therefore,
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6 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
7 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
8 Session of 2008, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature
9 urges the Board of Directors of the National High School Mock
10 Trial Championship to accommodate the religious beliefs of
11 students participating in the competition; and;
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the
14 National High School Mock Trial Championship is urged to
15 restructure the rules of the competition to allow qualifying
16 students of all faiths to compete fully in this national
17 championship without having to violate their religious beliefs;
18 and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
21 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
22 Board of Directors of the National High School Mock Trial
23 Championship.
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OFFERED BY:

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