

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 506

EFFECTIVE ~~XXXXXXXX~~ *Approved* October 30, 2005

WHEREAS, Freedom of conscience is at the very core of the founding of our nation; and legislation originally passed in 1940 protects the rights of those who cannot in conscience bear arms by establishing alternative service for drafted conscientious objectors; and

WHEREAS, Increasingly, the ability of our government to wage war relies less on conscripted soldiers and more on “drafted dollars” to pay for advanced technology; and

WHEREAS, These advanced weapons perpetrate violence not only by means of their incredible destructive powers, but also through the devastation they cause in our communities by draining essential financial resources needed to address basic human needs; and

WHEREAS, According to the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the War Resisters League, analysis of the *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2004* shows that in the current fiscal year, 41.9% through 47% of the total budgeted Federal funds outlay will be spent on current and past military expenses (the range depends on the proportion of the Federal debt deemed military in origin); and, according to the Center for Defense Information, the annual military budget of the

United States is greater than the combined budgets of the next twenty largest military budgets in the world; and

WHEREAS, With almost half of every tax dollar directed to past and present war making and weapons procurement, those taxpayers who have deep ethical, moral and/or religious objections to participation in war see themselves as being “drafted” into military service through their tax dollars, finding that the coerced support of military violence through taxation violates their conscience by compelling them to become collaborators in the development and proliferation of weapons and practices designed to cause death and destruction; and

WHEREAS, It is nearly impossible to avoid paying the coercive military tax (short of living below the taxable income level) without risking fines and imprisonment; and

WHEREAS, The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act, which was originally introduced in 1972, and was reintroduced in 2003, would address these widespread concerns about funding military violence while also affirming the conscientious objector’s freedom of religion and conscience, by amending the Internal Revenue Code to create a separate tax fund (the “Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund”) earmarked for nonmilitary spending only; under the Act, this separate fund would be allocated annually to any appropriation not for current military purposes; and

WHEREAS, Conscientious objection to participation in military service based on religious, moral and ethical beliefs is recognized under Federal law, with provisions made for alternative service; and

WHEREAS, This is a right derived from the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, in which the framers, recognizing free exercise of religion as an inalienable right, secured its protection from government interference, protection which Congress reaffirmed in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993; and

WHEREAS, The right to freedom of conscience is secured in Article 18 of the United Nations Charter of Human Rights, and the application of Article 18 to conscientious objection to participation in war is affirmed by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in its General Comment 22 and by the UN Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1998/77; and

WHEREAS, Under the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act, a “designated conscientious objector” is a taxpayer who is opposed to participation in war in any form based upon the taxpayer’s deeply held moral, ethical or religious beliefs or training, and who has certified these beliefs in writing to the Secretary of the Treasury; and

WHEREAS, Taxpayers who are conscientious objectors recognize and affirm their civic and legal responsibilities to pay their full share of Federal taxes, and seek to do so without violation of their fundamental moral, ethical or religious beliefs; and

WHEREAS, While the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act would not directly affect spending priorities, the level of participation in the Peace Tax Fund would be published in the Congressional Record annually, providing a visible barometer for

judging the nation's conscience in regard to participation in war;
and

WHEREAS, Respecting the religious freedom of
conscientious objectors will strengthen the tax system and will
preserve the diversity of convictions that protect our democracy;
and

WHEREAS, The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act
recognizes and affirms the right of American taxpayers to pay 100%
of their taxes without violating their deeply held convictions of
conscience against participation in war; and

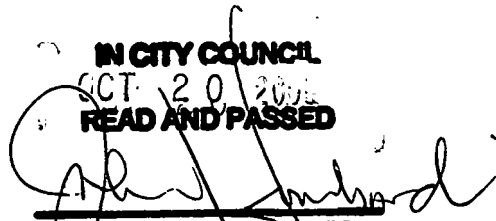
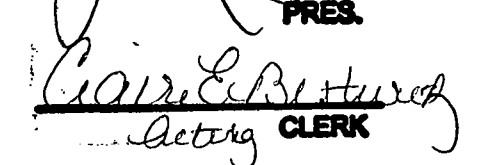
WHEREAS, The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund
reports a significant increase in support for the concept of a Peace
Tax Fund in recent years, with over 75 diverse national and regional
organizations formally endorsing the legislation, including historic
peace churches such as the Mennonites and Quakers; mainline
Protestant denominations, such as the Presbyterian Church (US)
and Evangelicals for Social Action; other religious groups such as
the General Assembly, Orthodox Catholic Church (Romano-
Byzantine Synod); Jewish Peace Fellowship; Buddhist Peace
Fellowship; Christian Legal Society; and a number of other Catholic,
Jewish and Unitarian organizations; Veterans for Peace; the
National Green party; the American Arab Anti-Discrimination
Committee; and many other civil rights and civil liberties
organizations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Council
of the City of Providence calls upon the Congress and the President
of the United States to enact into law the "Religious Freedom Peace

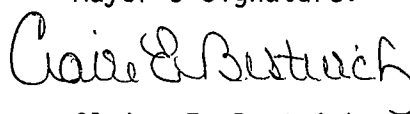
Tax Fund Act," to affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war and to provide that the income, estate or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Providence calls upon our United States Representatives and Senators to monitor and report on military expenditures funded by the taxes of residents of the City of Providence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Providence calls upon our United States Representatives and Senators to take a lead in Congressional action to issue an accurate yearly report of Federal tax dollars used for military spending, for instance, by publishing a non-unified budget as was the practice until the late 1960's (this would exclude Trust Funds such as the Social Security Trust Fund, the revenues for which are raised through taxes other than income, estate or gift taxes).

IN CITY COUNCIL
OCT 20 2001
READ AND PASSED

PRES.

Acting CLERK

Effective without the
Mayor's Signature:


Claire E. Bestwick
Acting City Clerk

HR 2631 IH

109th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. R. 2631

To affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war, to provide that the income, estate, or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes, to create the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund to receive such tax payments, to improve revenue collection, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**May 25, 2005**

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia (for himself, Mr. LEACH, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. OWENS, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. LEE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. WATSON, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. FARR, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. WATT, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. MCKINNEY, and Mr. STRICKLAND) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war, to provide that the income, estate, or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes, to create the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund to receive such tax payments, to improve revenue collection, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act'.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The framers of the United States Constitution, recognizing free exercise of religion as an inalienable right, secured its protection in the First Amendment of the Constitution; and Congress reaffirmed it in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, which restores the compelling interest by prohibiting the government from imposing a substantial burden

on the free exercise of religion unless it demonstrates that application of the burden is the least restrictive means of achieving a compelling governmental interest.

(2) Many people (Quakers, Mennonite, church of the Brethren) and others immigrated to this country expressly to escape religious persecution for their pacifist beliefs, yet in world War I hundreds of conscientious objectors were imprisoned for their beliefs. Seventeen were sentenced to death, 142 were sentenced to life terms, and 345 received sentences of 16.5 years. None of the death sentences were carried out, but 16 conscientious objectors died in prison as a result of mistreatment.

(3) In World War II, Congress and the Administration recognized 'alternative civilian service' in lieu of military service, in the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 to accommodate a wide spectrum of religious beliefs and practices. Subsequent case law also has expanded these exemptions. This statutory policy has been characterized in case law as a 'long standing tradition in this country' and one with roots 'deeply embedded in history.' (Welsh v. United States, 1970) During World War II thousands of conscientious objectors provided essential staff for mental hospitals and volunteered as human test subjects for arduous medical experiments, and provided other service for the national health, safety and interest.

(4) For more than 3 decades, these taxpayers sought legal relief from either having their homes, livestock, automobiles, and other property seized; bank accounts attached; wages garnished; fines imposed; and threat of imprisonment for failure to pay; or violating their consciences.

(5) Conscientious objection to participation in military service based upon moral, ethical, or religious beliefs is recognized in Federal law, with provision for alternative service; but no such provision exists for taxpayers who are conscientious objectors who must labor for many weeks each year to pay taxes and to support military activities which violate their deeply held beliefs.

(6) The Joint Committee on Taxation has certified that a tax trust fund, providing for conscientious objector taxpayers to pay their full taxes for non-military purposes, would increase Federal revenues.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

(a) Designated Conscientious Objector- For purposes of this Act, the term 'designated conscientious objector' means a taxpayer who is opposed to participation in war in any form based upon the taxpayer's deeply held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs or training (within the meaning of the Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. App. 450 et seq.)), and who has certified these beliefs in writing to the Secretary of the Treasury in such form and manner as the Secretary provides.

(b) Military Purpose- For purposes of this Act, the term 'military purpose' means any activity or program which any agency of the Government conducts, administers, or sponsors and which effects an augmentation of military forces or of defensive and offensive intelligence activities, or enhances the capability of any person or nation to wage war, including the appropriation of funds by the United States for--

- (1) the Department of Defense;
- (2) the Central Intelligence Agency;
- (3) the National Security Council;
- (4) the Selective Service System;
- (5) activities of the Department of Energy that have a military purpose;
- (6) activities of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration that have a military purpose;
- (7) foreign military aid; and
- (8) the training, supplying, or maintaining of military personnel, or the manufacture, construction, maintenance, or development of military weapons, installations, or strategies.

SEC. 4. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM PEACE TAX FUND.

- (a) Establishment- The Secretary of the Treasury shall establish an account in the Treasury of the United States to be known as the 'Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund', for the deposit of income, gift, and estate taxes paid by or on behalf of taxpayers who are designated conscientious objectors. The method of deposit shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury in a manner that minimizes the cost to the Treasury and does not impose an undue burden on such taxpayers.
- (b) Use of Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund- Funds in the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund shall be allocated annually to any appropriation not for a military purpose.
- (c) Report- The Secretary of the Treasury shall report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate each year on the total amount transferred into the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund during the preceding fiscal year and the purposes for which such amount was allocated in such preceding fiscal year. Such report shall be printed in the Congressional Record upon receipt by the Committees.
- (d) Sense of Congress- It is the sense of Congress that any increase in revenue to the Treasury resulting from the creation of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund shall be allocated in a manner consistent with the purposes of the Fund.

END

Bill Summary & Status for the 109th Congress

[NEW SEARCH](#) | [HOME](#) | [HELP](#) | [ABOUT COSPONSORS](#)

H.R.2631

Title: To affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war, to provide that the income, estate, or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes, to create the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund to receive such tax payments, to improve revenue collection, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Lewis, John](#) [GA-5] (introduced 5/25/2005) [Cosponsors](#) (38)

Latest Major Action: 5/25/2005 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

COSPONSORS(38), ALPHABETICAL [followed by Cosponsors withdrawn]: (Sort: [by date](#))

Rep Baldwin, Tammy [WI-2] - 5/25/2005	Rep Brown, Corrine [FL-3] - 5/25/2005
Rep Brown, Sherrod [OH-13] - 5/25/2005	Rep Clay, Wm. Lacy [MO-1] - 7/28/2005
Rep Conyers, John, Jr. [MI-14] - 5/25/2005	Rep Cummings, Elijah E. [MD-7] - 5/25/2005
Rep Davis, Danny K. [IL-7] - 5/25/2005	Rep DeFazio, Peter A. [OR-4] - 5/25/2005
Rep Delahunt, William D. [MA-10] - 5/25/2005	Rep Eshoo, Anna G. [CA-14] - 5/25/2005
Rep Farr, Sam [CA-17] - 5/25/2005	Rep Frank, Barney [MA-4] - 5/25/2005
Rep Hinchey, Maurice D. [NY-22] - 5/25/2005	Rep Honda, Michael M. [CA-15] - 7/19/2005
Rep Jackson, Jesse L., Jr. [IL-2] - 5/25/2005	Rep Jackson-Lee, Sheila [TX-18] - 5/25/2005
Rep Johnson, Eddie Bernice [TX-30] - 5/25/2005	Rep Leach, James A. [IA-2] - 5/25/2005
Rep Lee, Barbara [CA-9] - 5/25/2005	Rep McDermott, Jim [WA-7] - 5/25/2005
Rep McGovern, James P. [MA-3] - 5/25/2005	Rep McKinney, Cynthia A. [GA-4] - 5/25/2005
Rep Meeks, Gregory W. [NY-6] - 9/15/2005	Rep Moran, Jerry [KS-1] - 5/25/2005
Rep Norton, Eleanor Holmes [DC] - 5/25/2005	Rep Oberstar, James L. [MN-8] - 5/25/2005
Rep Owens, Major R. [NY-11] - 5/25/2005	Rep Paul, Ron [TX-14] - 5/25/2005
Rep Payne, Donald M. [NJ-10] - 5/25/2005	Rep Rangel, Charles B. [NY-15] - 5/25/2005
Rep Rush, Bobby L. [IL-1] - 5/25/2005	Rep Sanders, Bernard [VT] - 5/26/2005
Rep Serrano, Jose E. [NY-16] - 5/25/2005	Rep Strickland, Ted [OH-6] - 5/25/2005
Rep Towns, Edolphus [NY-10] - 5/25/2005	Rep Watson, Diane E. [CA-33] - 5/25/2005
Rep Watt, Melvin L. [NC-12] - 5/25/2005	Rep Woolsey, Lynn C. [CA-6] - 5/25/2005

HR 2037 IH

108th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. R. 2037

To affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war, to provide that the income, estate, or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes, to create the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund to receive such tax payments, to improve revenue collection, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**May 8, 2003**

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia (for himself, Mr. LEACH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OBERSTAR, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. RUSH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. LEE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. FARR, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mr. HOEFFEL, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. CLAY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war, to provide that the income, estate, or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes, to create the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund to receive such tax payments, to improve revenue collection, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act'.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that--

(1) the framers of the United States Constitution, recognizing free exercise of religion as an unalienable right, secured its protection in the First Amendment of the Constitution; and Congress reaffirmed it in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993;

(2) taxpayers who are conscientious objectors recognize and affirm their civic and legal responsibilities to pay their full share of Federal taxes, and seek to do so without violation of their moral, ethical, or religious beliefs;

(3) for more than 25 years, these taxpayers have sought legal relief from either having their homes, automobiles, and other property seized, bank accounts attached, wages garnished, fines imposed, and threat of imprisonment for failure to pay, or violating their consciences;

(4) conscientious objection to participation in military service based upon moral, ethical, or religious beliefs is recognized in Federal law, with provision for alternative service; and

(5) the Joint Committee on Taxation has certified that a tax trust fund, providing for conscientious objector taxpayers to pay their full taxes for non-military purposes, would increase Federal revenues.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

(a) **DESIGNATED CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR**- For purposes of this Act, the term 'designated conscientious objector' means a taxpayer who is opposed to participation in war in any form based upon the taxpayer's deeply held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs or training (within the meaning of the Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. App. 450 et seq.)), and who has certified these beliefs in writing to the Secretary of the Treasury in such form and manner as the Secretary provides.

(b) **MILITARY PURPOSE**- For purposes of this Act, the term 'military purpose' means any activity or program which any agency of the Government conducts, administers, or sponsors and which effects an augmentation of military forces or of defensive and offensive intelligence activities, or enhances the capability of any person or nation to wage war, including the appropriation of funds by the United States for--

(1) the Department of Defense;

(2) the Central Intelligence Agency;

(3) the National Security Council;

(4) the Selective Service System;

(5) activities of the Department of Energy that have a military purpose;

(6) activities of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration that have a military purpose;

(7) foreign military aid; and

(8) the training, supplying, or maintaining of military personnel, or the manufacture, construction, maintenance, or development of military weapons, installations, or strategies.

SEC. 4. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM PEACE TAX FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT- The Secretary of the Treasury shall establish an account in the Treasury of the United States to be known as the 'Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund', for the deposit of income, gift, and estate taxes paid by or on behalf of taxpayers who are designated conscientious objectors. The method of deposit shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury in a manner that minimizes the cost to the Treasury and does not impose an undue burden on such taxpayers.

(b) USE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM PEACE TAX FUND- Funds in the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund shall be allocated annually to any appropriation not for a military purpose.

(c) REPORT- The Secretary of the Treasury shall report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate each year on the total amount transferred into the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund during the preceding fiscal year and the purposes for which such amount was allocated in such preceding fiscal year. Such report shall be printed in the Congressional Record upon receipt by the Committees.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS- It is the sense of Congress that any increase in revenue to the Treasury resulting from the creation of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund shall be allocated in a manner consistent with the purposes of the Fund.

END

Bill Summary & Status for the 108th Congress[NEW SEARCH](#) | [HOME](#) | [HELP](#) | [ABOUT COSPONSORS](#)**H.R.2037**

Title: To affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war, to provide that the income, estate, or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes, to create the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund to receive such tax payments, to improve revenue collection, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Lewis, John](#) [GA-5] (introduced 5/8/2003) [Cosponsors](#) (43)

Latest Major Action: 5/8/2003 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

COSPONSORS(43), ALPHABETICAL [followed by Cosponsors withdrawn]: (Sort: [by date](#))

Rep Baldwin, Tammy [WI-2] - 5/8/2003	Rep Brown, Corrine [FL-3] - 5/12/2004
Rep Brown, Sherrod [OH-13] - 5/8/2003	Rep Carson, Julia [IN-7] - 5/8/2003
Rep Clay, Wm. Lacy [MO-1] - 5/8/2003	Rep Conyers, John, Jr. [MI-14] - 3/3/2004
Rep Cummings, Elijah E. [MD-7] - 5/20/2004	Rep DeFazio, Peter A. [OR-4] - 5/8/2003
Rep Delahunt, William D. [MA-10] - 5/8/2003	Rep Eshoo, Anna G. [CA-14] - 5/8/2003
Rep Farr, Sam [CA-17] - 5/8/2003	Rep Fattah, Chaka [PA-2] - 6/12/2003
Rep Frank, Barney [MA-4] - 5/8/2003	Rep Hinchey, Maurice D. [NY-22] - 5/8/2003
Rep Hoeffel, Joseph M. [PA-13] - 5/8/2003	Rep Holt, Rush D. [NJ-12] - 7/18/2003
Rep Honda, Michael M. [CA-15] - 10/5/2004	Rep Hooley, Darlene [OR-5] - 5/8/2003
Rep Jackson, Jesse L., Jr. [IL-2] - 5/8/2003	Rep Jackson-Lee, Sheila [TX-18] - 5/8/2003
Rep Johnson, Eddie Bernice [TX-30] - 5/8/2003	Rep Leach, James A. [IA-2] - 5/8/2003
Rep Lee, Barbara [CA-9] - 5/8/2003	Rep Markey, Edward J. [MA-7] - 10/7/2004
Rep McCarthy, Karen [MO-5] - 2/3/2004	Rep McGovern, James P. [MA-3] - 5/8/2003
Rep Miller, George [CA-7] - 5/8/2003	Rep Moran, Jerry [KS-1] - 3/10/2004
Rep Norton, Eleanor Holmes [DC] - 5/8/2003	Rep Oberstar, James L. [MN-8] - 5/8/2003
Rep Owens, Major R. [NY-11] - 5/8/2003	Rep Paul, Ron [TX-14] - 5/8/2003
Rep Payne, Donald M. [NJ-10] - 5/8/2003	Rep Rahall, Nick J., II [WV-3] - 6/4/2003
Rep Rangel, Charles B. [NY-15] - 2/3/2004	Rep Rush, Bobby L. [IL-1] - 5/8/2003
Rep Sanders, Bernard [VT] - 5/8/2003	Rep Serrano, Jose E. [NY-16] - 5/4/2004
Rep Strickland, Ted [OH-6] - 6/3/2004	Rep Towns, Edolphus [NY-10] - 5/8/2003
Rep Watson, Diane E. [CA-33] - 10/8/2003	Rep Watt, Melvin L. [NC-12] - 6/17/2004
Rep Woolsey, Lynn C. [CA-6] - 5/8/2003	

Claire Bestwick

From: Rmwward2@aol.com

Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2005 11:12 AM

To: Claire Bestwick

Subject: Resolution for October 20, city council meeting

Dear Claire:

I would like to sponsor a Resolution placed on the council docket for October 20th which would include some of the information in this email attachment.

Would you formulate the Resolution based on the Rhode Island memo?

Thanks,
Rita

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William D.", is centered below the typed text.

9/22/2005

Res. No. 367

Resolution in support of the "Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act," ~~H.R. 2037~~, to affirm the rights of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war by providing that the income, estate or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes.

~~By Council Members Perkins, Martinez, Barron, Lopez, Foster, Reed, Brewer, Jackson,
Monserate and James~~

Whereas, Freedom of conscience is at the very core of the founding of our nation; and legislation originally passed in 1940 protects the rights of those who cannot in conscience bear arms by establishing alternative service for drafted conscientious objectors; and

Whereas, Increasingly, the ability of our government to wage war relies less on conscripted soldiers and more on "drafted dollars" to pay for advanced technology; and

Whereas, These advanced weapons perpetrate violence not only by means of their incredible destructive powers, but also through the devastation they cause in our communities by draining essential financial resources needed to address basic human needs; and

Whereas, According to the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the War Resisters League, analysis of the *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2004* shows that in the current fiscal year, 41.9% through 47% of the total budgeted Federal funds outlay will be spent on current and past military expenses (the range

depends on the proportion of the Federal debt deemed military in origin); and, according to the Center for Defense Information, the annual military budget of the United States is greater than the combined budgets of the next twenty largest military budgets in the world; and

Whereas, According to the National Priorities Project, in addition to funding budgeted military expenses through our federal taxes, by the end of 2004, New York City taxpayers can expect to have paid over \$5.5 billion as their share of unbudgeted, supplemental appropriations for current war expenditures, while suffering the effects of a severe fiscal crisis; and

Whereas, With almost half of every tax dollar directed to past and present war-making and weapons procurement, those taxpayers who have deep ethical, moral and/or religious objections to participation in war see themselves as being “drafted” into military service through their tax dollars, finding that the coerced support of military violence through taxation violates their conscience by compelling them to become collaborators in the development and proliferation of weapons and practices designed to cause death and destruction; and

Whereas, It is nearly impossible to avoid paying the coercive military tax (short of living below the taxable income level) without risking fines and imprisonment; and

Whereas, The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act, ~~H.R. 2037~~, which was originally introduced in 1972, and was reintroduced in 2003, would address these widespread concerns about funding military violence while also affirming the

conscientious objector's freedom of religion and conscience, by amending the Internal Revenue Code to create a separate tax fund (the "Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund") earmarked for nonmilitary spending only; under the Act, this separate fund would be allocated annually to any appropriation not for current military purposes; and

Whereas, Conscientious objection to participation in military service based on religious, moral and ethical beliefs is recognized under Federal law, with provisions made for alternative service; and

Whereas, This is a right derived from the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, in which the framers, recognizing free exercise of religion as an inalienable right, secured its protection from government interference, protection which Congress reaffirmed in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993; and

Whereas, The right to freedom of conscience is secured in Article 18 of the United Nations Charter of Human Rights, and the application of Article 18 to conscientious objection to participation in war is affirmed by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in its General Comment 22 and by the UN Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1998/77; and

Whereas, Under the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act, a "designated conscientious objector" is a taxpayer who is opposed to participation in war in any form based upon the taxpayer's deeply held moral, ethical or religious beliefs or training, and who has certified these beliefs in writing to the Secretary of the Treasury; and

Whereas, Taxpayers who are conscientious objectors recognize and affirm their civic and legal responsibilities to pay their full share of Federal taxes, and seek to do so without violation of their fundamental moral, ethical or religious beliefs; and

Whereas, While the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act would not directly affect spending priorities, the level of participation in the Peace Tax Fund would be published in the Congressional Record annually, providing a visible barometer for judging the nation's conscience in regard to participation in war; and

Whereas, Respecting the religious freedom of conscientious objectors will strengthen the tax system and will preserve the diversity of convictions that protect our democracy; and

Whereas, The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act recognizes and affirms the right of American taxpayers to pay 100% of their taxes without violating their deeply-held convictions of conscience against participation in war; and

Whereas, The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund reports a significant increase in support for the concept of a Peace Tax Fund in recent years, with over 75 diverse national and regional organizations formally endorsing the legislation, including historic peace churches such as the Mennonites and Quakers; mainline Protestant denominations, such as the Presbyterian Church (US) and Evangelicals for Social Action; other religious groups such as the General Assembly, Orthodox Catholic Church (Romano-Byzantine Synod); Jewish Peace Fellowship; Buddhist Peace Fellowship; Christian Legal Society; and a number of other Catholic, Jewish and Unitarian

organizations; Veterans for Peace; the National Green party; the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; and many other civil rights and civil liberties organizations; and

Whereas, The Act has bi-partisan support and 37 co-sponsors, among them Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D), Rep. Major R. Owens (D), Rep. Jose E. Serrano (D), and Rep. Edolphus Towns (D) of New York; Rep. Jerry Moran (KS, R); Rep. James Leach (IA, R); Rep. Ron Paul (TX, R); Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (MI, D); Rep. Barney Frank (MA, D); Rep. Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. (IL, D); Rep. Barbara Lee (CA, D); Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC, D); Rep. Bobby L. Rush (IL, D); now, therefore, be it

Prov.
Resolved, That the Council of the City of ~~New York~~ calls upon the Congress and the President of the United States to enact into law the "Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act," ~~H.R. 2037~~, to affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war and to provide that the income, estate or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes; and be it further

Prov.
Resolved, That the Council of the City of ~~New York~~ calls upon our United States Representatives and Senators to monitor and report on military expenditures funded by ~~the City of New York~~ the taxes of residents of New York City, and be it further

Prov.
Resolved, That the Council of the City of ~~New York~~ calls upon our United States Representatives and Senators to take a lead in Congressional action to issue an accurate yearly report of Federal tax dollars used for military spending, for instance, by publishing a non-unified budget as was the practice until the late 1960's (this would exclude Trust

Funds such as the Social Security Trust Fund, the revenues for which are raised through taxes other than income, estate or gift taxes).

LS # 476 - TMQ

05/11/04

Rhode Island Campaign for Conscience (RICC) Q&A:

What is the National Campaign for Peace Tax Fund?

The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund (NCPTF) is a non-profit advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C. The Campaign works solely to pass Peace Tax Fund legislation, allowing citizens to participate in the tax system without violating their fundamental beliefs about engaging in violence.

What is the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund?

The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund (RFPTF) Bill, H.R 2631, in the U.S. Congress would amend tax law to recognize the legal status of conscientious objection to payment of military taxes.

If enacted, the Bill would establish a Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund in the

- Federal Treasury to receive the taxes of conscientious objectors. Money from
- this fund would be allocated annually to any non-military appropriation within the federal budget. None of the money could be used for any military expense.

Why was Rhode Island chosen for this campaign?

This campaign is about faith, hope, and conscience. Rhode Island was chosen for this campaign because of its unique history of religious freedom, which draws on founder Roger Williams' historic belief that the powers of government must not interfere with the free exercise of conscience and relationship with the Divine.

Our state motto is "Hope". And just like the lighthouses that dot Rhode Island's

coastline, we believe that this campaign will provide guidance and hope to others throughout the country struggling with the current legal consequences of living their faith and conscience.

What can I do?

- Attend a Peace Tax Potluck to learn more about the specific goals of RICC
- Sign-up for email Action Alerts at www.ri.peacetaxfund.org
- Endorse RICC as an individual or organization at www.ri.peacetaxfund.org
- Contact the RI Congressional Delegation at www.ri.peacetaxfund.org
- Donate to the Peace Tax Fund at address below or www.peacetaxfund.org
- Write a letter to the Editor of your local press telling them what you think
- Join the NCPTF by signing up online at www.peacetaxfund.org
- Volunteer in the RICC office

Rhode Island Campaign for Conscience, 33 Chestnut Street, Providence, 02903

Phone 401.521.2187, **Fax** 401.521.3960, **Email** natalie@peacetaxfund.org

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 20, 2006

Dear Ms. Bestwick:

On behalf of the President, I would like to thank you for forwarding Resolution No. 506, adopted by the Providence City Council. The President appreciates hearing your views and welcomes your suggestions.

I have taken the liberty of sharing your resolution with the appropriate Administration officials for their review and consideration.

If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me. With the President's best wishes,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ruben Barrales". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ruben Barrales
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of Intergovernmental Affairs

Ms. Claire E. Bestwick
City Clerk
Providence City Council
25 Dorrance St
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3215

RB:mcm