

May 17, 2005

Congressman Akin Reintroduces Measure to Prevent Judicial Censorship of the Pledge of Allegiance

**WASHINGTON, D.C.-** Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO) today reintroduced a measure that would protect the right of schoolchildren to say the phrase “under God” while reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Akin’s bill, the Pledge Protection Act (PPA) of 2005, would restrict the jurisdiction of lower federal courts and the Supreme Court from ruling on the constitutionality of the Pledge.

The bill, which is being introduced today by both Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO), and U.S. Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ), uses the power granted to Congress by Article III of the Constitution to establish the jurisdiction of federal courts.

“It is time for Congress to take decisive action and protect the freedom of Americans to express their faith in God and the principle that it is God, not government, who grants us our rights,” Akin said. “I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House to pass the PPA as well as working with Sen. Jon Kyl as he advances his companion bill in the Senate.

Originally introduced in May 2003, the bill was a response to the decision by the Ninth Circuit declaring the phrase “under God” unconstitutional. The Pledge Protection Act (PPA) was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives with a vote of 247 to 173, but failed to be approved by the Senate.

The PPA currently has 135 original cosponsors. Akin said he plans to again work with House Judiciary Chairman James Sensenbrenner to bring the bill to the floor for a vote in the 109th Congress.

Akin said the words of Thomas Jefferson have helped inspire his effort to protect the Pledge.

“As President Jefferson said, ‘God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a Gift from God?’

“That rhetorical question answers itself, and the answer is a firm ‘no.’ If we jettison ‘under God’ from the Pledge, we break faith with our Founders and the very cornerstone of our precious liberty. We dare not make that break,” Akin concluded.