

July 2, 2003

Senator Talent introduces companion bill to Akin's Pledge Protection Act of 2003

St. Charles- U.S Senator Jim Talent (R-MO) and Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO) will announce the introduction of legislation in the U.S. Congress to protect the Pledge of Allegiance at a protect the pledge rally today at 10:00 a.m. at the County Government building, 100 N. Third Street, St. Charles.

Today's rally highlights the introduction of Senator Talent's Protect the Pledge Act of 2003. Talent's bill is a companion to the Pledge Protection Act of 2003, which was filed this May by Congressman Akin. Akin's Pledge Protection Act has garnered the support of 218 cosponsors, including Speaker of the U.S. House J. Dennis Hastert.

The legislation would guarantee the right of children to say the phrase "under God" when they recite the Pledge of Allegiance. The legislation affirms the constitutionality of the Pledge of Allegiance by restricting the jurisdiction of lower federal courts from ruling on it. The power of Congress to limit the jurisdiction of the lower federal courts is granted in Article III of the constitution.

"The idea that there is a God, that God grants rights to humankind and that the essential purpose of government is to protect these rights is a fundamental principle of our founders and one that is believed and cherished by a vast majority of Americans," said Akin. "With 218 cosponsors we now have enough votes to pass this legislation in the House. With Senator Talent's leadership, this important legislation is certain to succeed in the Senate."

"I believe it is the responsibility of Congress to protect the Constitution and the Pledge of Allegiance," Talent said. "The Senate voted unanimously to support the use of "under God" in the Pledge, but in my judgment we should do more. The Protect the Pledge Act preserves and protects individual rights to affirm their beliefs and pledge their allegiance to the flag while making certain that no person would ever be forced to say "under God" when reciting the Pledge. I am optimistic that we can rally Congress to defend the Constitution and protect the Pledge by limiting the jurisdiction of the lower federal courts."