

Resolution No. 1983

DATE April 22, 2024
TO: Board of Mayor and Alderman
FROM Alderman Daniel Berry

SUBJECT: Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the placement of the National Motto "In God We Trust" on City Emergency Response vehicles.

BACKGROUND:

The national motto "In God We Trust" holds significant historical and cultural value in the United States, having been designated as such in 1956 by the U.S. Congress. This phrase is a part of everyday currency and embodies a longstanding national sentiment. The City of Tullahoma proposes adding this motto to all city-operated emergency vehicles as a reaffirmation of these values and a symbolic display of national heritage.

This initiative is prompted by a desire to foster a sense of national pride and unity, reflecting a common patriotic sentiment rather than any religious endorsement. The display is intended to be a passive symbol, aligning with precedents upheld by judicial interpretations that recognize such uses as lawful expressions of America's cultural and historical identity.

The resolution aims to standardize this practice across all emergency vehicles to ensure visibility and cohesion in the messaging. Thus, the community's connection to national identity will be enhanced while respecting the constitutional boundaries concerning the establishment of religion.

This agenda item seeks approval to move forward with this initiative, ensuring that the implementation is handled with attention to aesthetic consistency and fiscal responsibility, as outlined by city officials, including the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief, and the City Administrator.

Recommended Action: Approve the resolution, which authorizes the display of the national motto "In God We Trust" on all emergency vehicles operated by the City of Tullahoma. Approval of this resolution will affirm the city's commitment to national heritage and ensure the implementation of this initiative within the current fiscal budget and consistent with the aesthetic standards of existing vehicle markings.

It is further recommended that the Board direct the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief, in consultation with the City Administrator, to oversee the design and placement of the motto on the vehicles. The Department of Budget and Finance should also be directed to allocate the necessary funds for the implementation of this resolution within the specified timeframe.

ATTACHMENTS:
Resolution No. 1983.

RESOLUTION NO. 1983**A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMAN OF THE CITY OF
TULLAHOMA, TENNESSEE, AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF THE
NATIONAL MOTTO IN GOD WE TRUST BE PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED ON ALL
EMERGENCY VEHICLES.**

WHEREAS, "In God We Trust" was adopted by the United States Congress as a national motto of the United States in 1956; and,

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress has required the motto to be inscribed on coins and printed currency of the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the sentiment "In God We Trust" has been an intrical part of the United States society since its founding; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Tullahoma desires to display the national motto on its emergency vehicles and,

WHEREAS, recognizing that the City of Tullahoma should not take any actions establishing or promoting the establishment of religion, any display of the national motto on emergency vehicles is intended as a patriotic or ceremonial symbol; and,

WHEREAS, this action is intended to be a passive use and not intended to coerce or encourage citizen participation in religion or seek approval or disapproval of religion; and,

WHEREAS, the display of the national motto on governmental vehicles has been upheld by the courts as a legal expression of our national heritage;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMAN OF TULLAHOMA, TENNESSEE, that the Board of Aldermen of Tullahoma, Tennessee, hereby affirms the national motto “In God We Trust” be prominently displayed on all emergency vehicles owned or operated by the City of Tullahoma.

Be it further resolved that the motto's placement be standardized on all vehicles, ensuring visibility and readability.

Be it further resolved that the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief shall determine the design and size of the lettering together, in consultation with the City Administrator, to ensure aesthetic consistency with existing signage and markings.

Be it further resolved that the City’s Department of Budget and Finance shall allocate funds necessary for implementing this resolution.

Be it further resolved that implementation shall begin within 90 days from the passage of this resolution, with a completion goal within the current fiscal year.

OR

Be it further resolved that funding shall be allocated in the upcoming 2024/2025 budget, and implementation shall begin within 90 days of the budget being passed, with a completion goal within the respective fiscal year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF TULLAHOMA, TENNESSEE, that this Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, the public welfare requiring it, as adopted the ____ day of _____, 2024.