

House Resolution 1702

By: Representatives Davis of the 87<sup>th</sup>, Scott of the 76<sup>th</sup>, Bell of the 75<sup>th</sup>, Jackson of the 68<sup>th</sup>,  
and Griffin of the 149<sup>th</sup>

### A RESOLUTION

1 Urging for the protection of constitutional conscience, the rule of law, and the lawful exercise  
2 of conscientious objection; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, this resolution shall be known and may be cited as "The Constitutional  
4 Conscience Objectors and Guardians of the Rule of Law Resolution"; and

5 WHEREAS, the United States Constitution establishes the rule of law as the foundation of  
6 our democratic republic, ensuring that government actions are accountable to constitutional  
7 limits; and

8 WHEREAS, members of the United States Armed Forces swear an oath to support and  
9 defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; and

10 WHEREAS, the First Amendment protects freedom of religion, freedom of conscience, and  
11 the right of individuals to have deeply held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs; and

12 WHEREAS, the longstanding American tradition of conscientious objection recognizes that  
13 individuals may lawfully decline participation in war when their deeply held beliefs prohibit  
14 them from bearing arms or participating in armed conflict; and

15 WHEREAS, historically, conscientious objection has been recognized for individuals whose  
16 beliefs arise from religious traditions promoting peace, including but not limited to the  
17 Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Mennonites, and the Church of the Brethren; and

18 WHEREAS, modern interpretations of conscientious objection within the United States  
19 recognize that such objections may also arise from ethical, moral, or philosophical beliefs,  
20 even when those beliefs are not tied to a specific religious doctrine; and

21 WHEREAS, federal law provides a process for individuals to apply for conscientious  
22 objector status through the Selective Service System, allowing eligible individuals to perform  
23 alternative service in support of public health, safety, or national welfare rather than combat  
24 roles; and

25 WHEREAS, transparency, accountability, and adherence to the rule of law are essential to  
26 maintaining public trust in the decisions that lead a nation into armed conflict; and

27 WHEREAS, the American people have the right to expect that decisions regarding war and  
28 military engagement will be conducted in accordance with the Constitution, federal law, and  
29 principles of justice; and

30 WHEREAS, questions regarding transparency, sealed records, delayed accountability, and  
31 potential violations of constitutional principles raise serious concerns regarding adherence  
32 to the rule of law; and

33 WHEREAS, the United States military exists to defend the Constitution and the freedoms  
34 of the American people—not to shield wrongdoing or circumvent constitutional protections;  
35 and

36 WHEREAS, a healthy democracy requires vigilance, transparency, and adherence to lawful  
37 procedures when matters of war and peace are considered.

38 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
39 the members of this body urge for the protection of constitutional conscience, recognizing  
40 the lawful right of individuals to seek conscientious objector status when their deeply held  
41 moral, ethical, or religious beliefs prohibit participation in armed conflict.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body recognize that individuals  
43 exercising conscientious objection should do so through lawful channels and established  
44 procedures under federal law; the rule of law must be followed in all matters related to war  
45 authorization, military engagement, and the protection of constitutional rights; and that  
46 transparency and accountability must guide the actions of public officials responsible for  
47 decisions that affect the lives of service members and the security of the nation.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body affirm their support for  
49 members of the United States Armed Forces and veterans who have faithfully served under  
50 their constitutional oath.

51 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
52 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the  
53 public and the press.