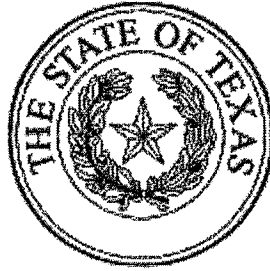


CHARLES PERRY
Texas State Senator
District 28



DREW SPRINGER
Texas State Representative
District 68

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RQ-0059-KP

OCT 05 2015
OPINION COMMITTEE

October 5, 2015

The Honorable Ken Paxton
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, Texas 78711-2548

Dear General Paxton,

The Childress Police Department has come under recent attack by the *Freedom From Religion Foundation* for its decision to display "In God We Trust" on its patrol vehicles. As the Senator and Representative of this community, we write to ask for your opinion under section 402.042 of the Government Code on whether a police department or sheriff's office may display the national motto, "In God We Trust", on its patrol vehicles.

Last year, the Second Circuit rejected a challenge by the same organization on the legality of using the motto on our currency. Prior to this ruling, "In God We Trust" was first challenged in the 1970 case *Aronow v. United States*, where the Ninth Circuit also ruled in favor of the motto, stating: "It is quite obvious that the national motto and the slogan on coinage and currency 'In God We Trust' has nothing whatsoever to do with the establishment of religion. Its use is of patriotic or ceremonial character and bears no true resemblance to a governmental sponsorship of a religious exercise."

At a time when law enforcement is facing assaults across the country, our police should not be burdened with worrying about frivolous lawsuits over issues that have already been settled. An opinion from the Attorney General will help give law enforcement clarity as to the legality of displaying "In God We Trust" on their patrol vehicles.

Any insight you have into this matter would be much appreciated. Thank you for your service.

For Texas,

Handwritten signature of Charles Perry in cursive.

Charles Perry
State Senator
District 28

Handwritten signature of Drew Springer in cursive.

Drew Springer
State Representative
District 68