

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT

1 Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc., has been a steadfast supporter of
2 the "Religious Freedom Restoration Act," (RFRA) which restored the free exercise of one's
3 religion to the status of "fundamental" constitutional right. That right had been weakened
4 considerably by Supreme Court cases such as *Oregon vs. Smith* in 1990, which radically changed
5 the standard by which the government could interfere with religious liberty.

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7 When RFRA was signed into law in 1992, it had broad bi-partisan support and the endorsement
8 of religious and civil liberties organizations spanning the political spectrum. Recently however,
9 in the case of *City of Boerne v. Flores*, the Supreme Court ruled RFRA unconstitutional.

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11 Fortunately, it appears that the Justices did not decide the case on issues related to church/state
12 separation or religious liberty. The majority argued instead that the Congress lacked the
13 proscribed powers to make such a law; that such a law violated the federalism principle of the
14 constitution.

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16 Hadassah is deeply troubled by the ruling in *Beorne*. We reaffirm our commitment to RFRA and
17 the protection of religion and religious freedom. Hadassah will continue to support efforts to
18 enhance such protection in courts and in legislatures, both state and federal, throughout the land.