
Subject:

FW: Ordinance 2016-026

From: Information Account <info@lastfrontierfreethinkers.org>

Date: June 21, 2016 at 2:02:18 PM AKDT

To: <jblankenship@kpb.us>, <bgilman@kpb.us>

Subject: Ordinance 2016-026

Mr. Gilman,

I am writing on behalf of the Last Frontier Freethinkers. We are a local secular humanist group on the peninsula with roughly 60 members. We were so pleased to see Ordinance 2016-026 on the agenda tonight but we were just informed that it sounds like you plan to pull it.

We would like to humbly request that you go forward with introducing the ordinance this evening. We feel it is inappropriate for public officials—many of whom have tax-paid positions and all of whom take an oath to uphold secular constitutions—to schedule prayer at government functions, or open government meetings with prayer and religious ritual.

Citizens of all religions or no religion are compelled to come before local government bodies on civic, secular matters: variances, sewers, permits, licenses, repair, etc. They should not be subjected to a religious show or test, or be expected to bow heads and demonstrate religious obeisance at a government function. (We fail to see why divine guidance is needed over such earthly matters, anyway.)

Nor is it necessary to pray on taxpayers' time and dime. Members of government boards are free to pray privately or to worship on their own time in their own way. When government bodies lend their power and prestige to religion, this amounts to a governmental endorsement that exclude one-fifth of the population—today one in five adult Americans is nonreligious. This practice inevitably will turn minorities, including atheists, Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Wiccans, into second-class citizens. Even when prayers are "nondenominational," there is no way a government body may conduct prayer that will not inevitably exclude, divide and embarrass at least some taxpayers and constituents.

Even the Jesus of the New Testament condemned public prayer: "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret" (Matt. 6:5-13). Observing a strict separation of church and state will offend no one and include all citizens.

Kind Regards,

Carrie Henson, Last Frontier Freethinkers President

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In Reason We Trust.

Subject:

FW: New Public Comment to Assembly Members

From: Kenai Peninsula Borough [<mailto:webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>]**Sent:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 7:25 AM**To:** Assembly <AllCurrentBoroughAssemblyMembers@kpb.us>**Cc:** Blankenship, Johni <JBlankenship@kpb.us>**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members**Name:** mary griswold**Email:** mgrt@xyz.net**Subject:** Ord 2016-26 Invocation**Message:**

I am disappointed that Ordinance 2016-26 to repeal the Invocation did not receive the courtesy of introduction last night. I usually wait until after introduction to submit comments so I can address discussion if there is any. After last night, I am left almost speechless.

For more than 16 years, I have regularly requested my assembly member to seek removal of the Invocation. It makes me very uncomfortable, sometimes makes my skin crawl. I know it is legal, common, and traditional. But it is not required. I try to tune in a little late to avoid it. I hoped that perhaps people could gather to pray before the meeting so I could be prompt and not miss the roll call. I like knowing who is there, which is often not obvious with many unanimous/non-objection decisions.