

A BILL

To abolish the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, repeal section 201 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Abolition Act of 2026”.

SECTION 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

- (1) The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) monitors religious freedom abroad and makes policy recommendations.
- (2) By funding a commission on religious matters, the USCIRF expends money drawn from the Treasury on objects that are not among the enumerated powers of Congress, exceeding the “general Welfare” clause of Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, which James Madison explained in Federalist No. 41 is limited by the specific powers enumerated after it and confers no separate power to spend for any object Congress may choose.
- (3) The functions of the USCIRF are not “necessary and proper for carrying into Execution” any power vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States and therefore find no support in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which Madison in Federalist No. 44 described as a means of executing powers already granted rather than a source of new ones, as the Anti-Federalist writer Brutus warned in his first essay of 1787 it would otherwise become.
- (4) By placing the Federal Government in the business of evaluating religious matters, the USCIRF infringes the prohibition of any law respecting an establishment of religion, secured by the First Amendment, which provides that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”
- (5) In carrying out its functions, the USCIRF disregards the Ninth Amendment, which provides that “The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people,” including the right of the people to order their own lives, property, and affairs free of federal direction in matters the Constitution does not commit to the Federal Government.

(6) The Constitution delegates to the United States no power over religious matters. By funding a commission on religious matters, the USCIRF exercises powers that the Tenth Amendment reserves “to the States respectively, or to the people,” contrary to Federalist No. 45, in which Madison described the powers delegated to the Federal Government as “few and defined” and those remaining in the States as “numerous and indefinite.”

(7) The Declaration of Independence affirms that governments are instituted to secure the unalienable rights of the people and derive “their just powers from the consent of the governed,” and it charged the Crown with having “erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.” The USCIRF perpetuates the centralized administration the Declaration condemned.

(8) Abolishing the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom and repealing section 201 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 will reduce the size and cost of the Federal Government, return to the States and to the people the powers the Constitution reserves to them, and restore the constitutional principles of limited government and enumerated powers.

SECTION 3. ABOLITION OF THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

(a) In General.—The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom is hereby abolished effective immediately following the enactment of this Act.

(b) Wind-Down Operations.—Immediately following the enactment of this Act, the President shall designate an appropriate official to expeditiously wind down the operations of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, ceasing all functions, none of which shall be transferred to any other department or agency of the Federal Government.

(c) Transfer of Assets and Liabilities.—All assets, liabilities, contracts, property, and records of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom shall be transferred to the designated official under subsection (b) for appropriate disposition.

(d) Employee Transition.—Employees of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom shall be offered opportunities for reassignment within the federal government or provided with severance and retraining assistance as prescribed by existing federal law.

SECTION 4. REPEAL OF PROVISIONS OF LAW ESTABLISHING THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

(a) In General.—Section 201 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431), and any other provision of law establishing the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom or vesting functions in the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, are hereby repealed.

(b) Conforming Amendments.—The United States Code and all other relevant Federal laws are amended by—

(1) striking all references to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom and to any office, officer, or function established in or vested in the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom;

(2) terminating every function of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, no part of which shall be reassigned to any other department or agency of the Federal Government; and

(3) making such other conforming changes as necessary to reflect the repeal and the permanent abolition of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

(c) Effective Date.—The repeal under this section shall take effect immediately following the enactment of this Act.

SECTION 5. TRANSITION PROVISIONS.

(a) No Restoration of Prior Structures.—No element of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom shall revert to its organizational structure as it existed prior to the establishment of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and no function of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom shall be restored to any predecessor department, agency, or office.

(b) Permanent Abolition.—No department, agency, office, or other entity shall be established to carry out the functions of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom abolished by this Act.

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the remainder of the Act and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.