

# **The National Day of Prayer not without some controversy**

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The National Day of Prayer has been a controversial observance in recent times. This year U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb in Madison, Wis., ruled the day unconstitutional, violating separation of church and state.

Notwithstanding, President Barack Obama still plans on recognizing the Day of Prayer, and the Day of Prayer Task Force has appealed Crabb's decision.

The National Day of Prayer Task Force believes the day has great significance for the nation. It says that the event enables Americans to recall and to teach how the Founding Fathers sought the wisdom of God when faced with critical decisions. The task force says the National Day of Prayer stands as a call to humbly come before God, seeking his guidance for our leaders and his grace upon us as a people.

The task force also says the prayer event transcends differences, bringing together citizens from all backgrounds.

Shirley Dobson, NDP chairwoman, says, "We have lost many of our freedoms in America because we have been asleep. I feel if we do not become involved and support the annual National Day of Prayer, we could end up forfeiting this freedom, too."

According to Fox News, not all religious groups agree with the National Day of Prayer Task Force. For example, the Interfaith Alliance is disappointed that the task force seems to think it "owns" the National Day of Prayer. The alliance believes the task force

misrepresents the purpose of the observance. It also noted that Obama is not the pastor-in-chief of America and that the task force is not the spiritual judge of the president's actions.

The National Day of Prayer Task Force says its mission is to communicate with every individual the need for personal repentance and prayer, mobilizing the Christian community to intercede for America and its leadership in the seven centers of power: government, military, media, business, education, church and family. In 1775, the first Continental Congress called for a National Day of Prayer, and the president has called for a National Day of Prayer every year since 1975.

False rumors abound on the Internet that the National Day of Prayer has been canceled this year.

— Lynn Arave

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