

401 Ninth Street, NW, Suite 640

Washington, DC 20004

+1 202 430 1888

www.secularpolicyinstitute.net

August 22, 2015

His Excellency Otto Pérez Molina

President of Guatemala

Guatemalan National Palace

Guatemala City, Guatemala

Ambassador Julio Ligorria Carballido

Embassy of Guatemala

2220 R Street, NW

Washington, DC 20008

Dear President Molina and Ambassador Carballido:

Religious devotion is sensitive, intimate, and deeply personal. When a government decides to implement mandatory religious education for all children (both in public and private schools), in a particular religious tradition at public expense, a troublesome encroachment upon the dignity of a free conscience occurs. This encroachment sends a message that the government is uniquely qualified to determine which religion is truer above all others and that the particular religious sect has a reserved privileged place. A proposed bill **(name)** before the Guatemalan Congress would do just that, and the Guatemalan Humanist Association (Asociación Guatemalteca de Humanistas Seculares, or AGHS) is mounting a defense and needs our help.

According to the AGHS, over the course of the last nine months, a congressman claiming that he received ‘explicit instructions from God’ during a ‘divine revelation,’ has been planning and writing a bill proposal gathering support from local Evangelical and Pentecostal churches and organizations.” This bill would introduce weekly “Biblical Values” classes as mandatory curriculum, taught by (certified) “spiritual guide” chaplains. Students would receive a failing grade if they refused to attend this tax-payer funded, religious-indoctrination.

Protesting the bill at the Guatemalan Congress, AGHS spokesperson Carlos Mendoza spoke against the bill’s violation of the secular laws of the “National Education Act” and the “Act on the Integrity of Children and Adolescents.” Before being ejected from the building, Mendoza could barely finish a sentence with barrage of “Cast out Satan!,” “Protect the Children!,” and “Throw him out!”

Please join the Secular Policy Institute in supporting our brothers and sisters in Guatemala by opposing this bill.

Yours sincerely,



Edwina Rogers, CEO

Cell +1 202 674 7800

edwina@secularpolicyinstitute.net