

WASHINGTON (April 16) – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) today called “absurd” a federal judge’s ruling that the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional and urged President Obama to swiftly appeal the decision.

“This ruling is absurd and offensive to millions of Americans of many faiths, but my legal determination as an attorney is that the decision is based on severely flawed reasoning as well. Prayer has been a recognized part of our national life since the founding of our nation and Presidents have issued National Day of Prayer proclamations dating back to President Harry Truman. There has been no infringement on the liberties of believers or non-believers,” Bachus said in his letter to the President.

Aside from supporting an appeal of the ruling, Bachus urged the President to hold a National Day of Prayer event at the White House on this year’s scheduled date of May 6.

U.S. District Court Judge Barbara Crabb of the Western District of Wisconsin, an appointee of President Carter, yesterday ruled in favor of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, an organization of atheists, agnostics, and nontheists, which challenged the constitutionality of the National Day of Prayer proclamation. The ruling is not expected to apply to this year’s planned proclamation.

A copy of Congressman Bachus’ letter is attached.

April 16, 2010

The Honorable Barack H. Obama

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue

Washington, DC 20500-0003

Dear Mr. President:

With great concern, I am writing to urge you and Attorney General Eric Holder to appeal yesterday's ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Barbara Crabb of the Western District of Wisconsin that the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional.

This ruling is absurd and offensive to millions of Americans of many faiths, but my legal determination as an attorney is that the decision is based on severely flawed reasoning as well. Prayer has been a recognized part of our national life since the founding of our nation and Presidents have issued National Day of Prayer proclamations dating back to President Harry

Truman. There has been no infringement on the liberties of believers or non-believers.

With this year's National Prayer Day coming up on May 6, it would be extremely significant for you to swiftly appeal this ruling. In addition, I encourage you to hold a National Day of Prayer event at the White House as President Bush did in 2008.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Spencer Bachus

Member of Congress

