

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 12

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the  
enhancement of unity in America.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to  
the Committee on the Judiciary

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# RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives  
regarding the enhancement of unity in America.

Whereas, on June 18, 2015, the United States Supreme Court correctly concluded in *Walker III v. Texas Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Inc.* (No. 14–144; 576 U.S., 135 S. Ct. 2239) that messages on State license plates constitute “government speech”, not private speech protected by the First Amendment;

Whereas the Court also held that it is within the authority of a State such as Texas to reject messages on State-issued license plates, such as a depiction of the Confederate battle flag, that offend the sensibilities of its citizens;

Whereas divisive symbols, license plates, specialty license plates, replicas, and flags on public buildings or govern-

ment property, which constitute “government speech”, convey the vestiges of the history of slavery that has divided the United States;

Whereas the role of government is to promote equal protection under the Constitution and combat fear, oppression, and intimidation;

Whereas these divisive symbols have historically targeted and perpetuated fear, oppression, and intimidation of certain groups of Americans;

Whereas the continued existence of these divisive symbols as “government speech” is also a denial of equal protection under the law;

Whereas the United States can only be a perfect union where all are and feel equally protected under the law; and

Whereas equal protection under the law promotes a more perfect union, fairness, tolerance, peace, and a sense of community oneness, all unalienable rights enshrined in the Constitution: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-  
2       resentatives that the United States can achieve a more  
3       perfect union—

4               (1) through avoidance of “government speech”,  
5       as the State of Texas did in *Walker III v. Texas Di-*  
6       *vision, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Inc.*, which  
7       promotes or displays symbols, signs, and vestiges of  
8       racism, oppression, and intimidation in the States,  
9       localities, and territories;

1           (2) by immediately abating the use of “govern-  
2       ment speech” through signs, actions, and words that  
3       promote division and tear at the fabric of the Amer-  
4       ican society; and

5           (3) by promoting tolerance and unity by taking  
6       actions to ensure that “government speech” does not  
7       foster division, disharmony, intolerance through gov-  
8       ernment-issued or sponsored flags, signs, images, or  
9       other symbols whether displayed in public or private.

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