

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To prohibit agencies from maintaining or sharing information relating to religious affiliation, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MARSHALL introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To prohibit agencies from maintaining or sharing information relating to religious affiliation, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Prohibiting Religious
5 Exemption and Accommodations Databases Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF THE SENATE.**

7 It is the sense of the Senate that—

8 (1) the freedoms of the First Amendment to the
9 Constitution of the United States, including the
10 right to free exercise of religion, are among the pre-

1 eminent blessings of liberty guaranteed by the Con-
2 stitution of the United States, and that religious
3 freedom need not be sacrificed in service to our Gov-
4 ernment, but must be respected by law; and

5 (2) immediate steps must be taken to prevent
6 unwarranted dissemination of information on reli-
7 gious exemptions or accommodations sought or pro-
8 vided by or to any individual in conformance with
9 principles of both section 552a of title 5, United
10 States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act
11 of 1974”), in particular subsection (e)(7) of such
12 section, as well as the guidance issued by the Equal
13 Employment Opportunity Commission on December
14 14, 2021.

15 **SEC. 3. MAINTENANCE OF INFORMATION RELATING TO RE-**
16 **LIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS.**

17 (a) AMENDMENTS TO THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974.—
18 Section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly
19 known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”) is amended—

20 (1) in subsection (a)(7)—

21 (A) by striking “means, with” and insert-
22 ing “—

23 “(A) means, with”;

24 (B) in subparagraph (A), as so designated,
25 by adding “and” at the end; and

1 (C) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(B) does not include the sharing, disclo-
3 sure, or dissemination of information con-
4 cerning a religious accommodation beyond the
5 minimum necessary for the purpose;”;

6 (2) in subsection (c)(1)—

7 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
8 (A), strike “except for disclosures made under
9 subsections (b)(1) or (b)(2) of this section,”;

10 (B) in subparagraph (A), by striking
11 “and” at the end;

12 (C) in subparagraph (B), by adding “and”
13 at the end; and

14 (D) by adding at the end the following:

15 “(C) a disclosure made under subsection
16 (b)(1) or (b)(2) only if the disclosure concerns
17 or describes how any individual exercises rights
18 guaranteed by the First Amendment, including
19 as related to a religious accommodation under
20 any Federal law;”;

21 (3) in subsection (o), by adding at the end the
22 following:

23 “(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act,
24 no record relating to the religious affiliation of an indi-
25 vidual that is contained in a system of records may be

1 disclosed to a recipient agency or non-Federal agency for
2 use in a computer matching program.”; and

3 (4) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(x) RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION.—For purposes of
5 subsection (e)(7), an individual voluntarily requesting, or
6 providing any information relating to, any religious accom-
7 modation, including to a COVID–19 vaccine requirement,
8 shall not constitute an express authorization for an agency
9 to maintain a record of any information related to the reli-
10 gious beliefs, identity, or affiliation of the individual.”.

11 (b) FOIA EXEMPTION.—Section 552(b) of title 5,
12 United States Code (commonly known as the “Freedom
13 of Information Act”) is amended—

14 (1) in paragraph (8), by striking “or” at the
15 end;

16 (2) in paragraph (9), by striking the period at
17 the end and inserting “; or”; and

18 (3) by inserting after paragraph (9) the fol-
19 lowing:

20 “(10) related to the religious affiliation of an
21 individual that is provided to or collected by an
22 agency (as defined in section 552a(a) of this title),
23 including for purposes of a religious accommodation
24 to a COVID–19 vaccine requirement.”.

1 (c) PRIVACY OF INFORMATION.—An agency (as de-
2 fined in section 552a(a) of title 5, United States Code
3 (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”) that col-
4 lects or is provided any information relating to the reli-
5 gious beliefs, identity, or affiliation of an individual for
6 purposes of a religious accommodation, including to a
7 COVID–19 vaccine requirement—

8 (1) shall maintain and use the information—

9 (A) in a manner that protects the con-
10 fidentiality of the information and privacy of
11 the individual to the maximum extent prac-
12 ticable; and

13 (B) separate from any other record of an
14 individual relating to a religious exemption or
15 accommodation request; and

16 (2) may not disclose the information with any
17 person outside of the agency, including any other
18 Federal or non-Federal agency or private organiza-
19 tion.

20 (d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act
21 or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed
22 to impede or authorize a delay in the timely processing
23 of a request made by an individual to an agency (as de-
24 fined in section 552a(a) of title 5, United States Code

1 (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974’’) for a
2 religious accommodation.