

## The Washington Area Secular Humanists, Inc.

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February 17, 2026

The Honorable Del. Melissa Wells  
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
145 Lowe House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21404

### **Re: OPPOSE HB67: Ten Commandments Monument Display Act**

Dear Chairperson Wells and Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

As a representative of the regional organization the Washington Area Secular Humanists (WASH), and of the national organization American Atheists, and as a Maryland resident, I write in opposition to HB67 currently before the committee.

WASH is a regional educational and community service organization incorporated in Maryland representing non-religious persons. American Atheists is a national civil rights organization.

HB67 proposes to place a Ten Commandments Monument on the grounds of the Maryland State House. This would be highly inappropriate and a direct violation of our cherished separation of church and state. Maryland is religiously diverse. We have residents of all faiths and of none. The Maryland state government should maintain a policy of strict neutrality on all matters of religious practice. Placing the Ten Commandments on public property, especially the state house, would in effect endorse one particular religion over all others and would be alienating to the many Marylanders who do not practice it. I expect that the aim of this bill is to do just that, in this case the favored religion being Christianity. And if so, then which version of Christianity? There are many. In fact, there is more than one version of the Ten Commandments. Which denomination's version would this monument display? The Catholic, Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish versions all differ.

Contrary to a myth widely propagated by Christian nationalists, the United States and that includes the State of Maryland, is not a Christian nation. It never has been and was never intended to be. There is no mention of Christianity in the US Constitution. In fact, it only mentions religion twice, once in Article VI and again in the First Amendment. In both cases, it separates religion and government. The United States is a country where one is free to practice any version of Christianity, any other religion, or no religion.

Many Christian nationalists claim that displaying the Ten Commandments would encourage better behavior among the populace. This is a baseless assertion for which there is absolutely no supporting evidence. None. Zero!

Let us respect the long tradition in Maryland of accepting our residents for whom they are based on their character and conduct, not on their religious beliefs. The Ten Commandments belong in

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churches, synagogues, or private homes, not in any publicly owned space such as the Maryland State House. Please vote against advancing this very bad bill.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Reid

The Washington Area Secular Humanists and  
Maryland State Director for American Atheists