

Major General (ret) Joe Arbuckle U.S. Army

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Before the Colorado Senate Transportation & Energy Committee
(January 23, 2023)

Madam Chair and members of the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee, I am a Colorado Resident and strong advocate for Senate Bill 23-025 that creates a Special "In God We Trust" License Plate for Colorado.

I attended junior high and high school at Littleton, then on to Western State College at Gunnison, where I graduated in 1968. The draft was looming which caused me to enter the Army. After retiring from the Army in 2000, my wife and I lived near Westcliffe for 16 years, moving to El Paso County in 2016.

54 years ago I swore to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic...so help me God". As an infantryman, I fought in Vietnam upholding that sacred oath, along with millions of other loyal patriots. When swearing that oath to the Constitution, we recognize all of our Rights enumerated in the Bill of Rights and Constitution come from our "Creator". Rights are not given to us by man, they come to all people from God.

Recognizing this, I am dismayed as to why allowing citizens to voluntarily put on their license plates "In God We Trust" is even being discussed. There must be a small minority, who for some reason, do not want to see the word "God". Votes in state and national legislative bodies like yours are for the most part governed by a majority vote. So why is it that a minority of vocal activists are able to push an agenda against God when the majority of citizens recognize the existence of God even if they do not practice organized religion? Those who do not want to see the word "God" do not have to look at the plates and they certainly should not deny the 1st Amendment Right of freedom of religion and speech to those who do want to put God on their plates.

Additional considerations:

- o In God We Trust is our National Motto. So why can our National Motto not be on license plates?
- o In God We Trust is on forms of our national currency which everyone sees, so why can it not be on license plates?
- o Inside the U.S. supreme court is Moses holding tablets of the 10 commandments, coming from God.
- o The U.S. House of Representatives has In "God We Trust" inside the chambers.

This is not a church vs state issue. Our Constitution prohibits the establishment of a national religion like the Church of England in the 1700s. This issue has nothing to do with a national religion. "God" is a universal term applied to the "Creator" and is used by many religions. The term "God" may be objectionable to atheists but they are a minority and must not dictate majority decisions. As said before, anyone objecting to "In God We Trust" on a license plate does not have to look at it. Just like we do not have to look at the dozens of other designer license plates in Colorado which are personal preferences.

I close by saying I do not understand why this is an issue; the merits are obvious.



Joe Arbuckle
Major General
U.S. Army (retired)

Senate Transportation & Energy

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SB23-025 In God We Trust Special License Plate

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Johnny Jenkins Against themselves	<p>Chair and Members of the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee. I am Dr. Johnny Jenkins. I have been a resident of this great state since 1969. I am also the Pastor of Solid Rock Missionary Baptist Church Denver Co. I am honored to be able to be a supporter of Senate Bill 23-025, In God We Trust License Plate of this great State of Colorado. I am a disabled Veteran who served in Viet Nam from 1968-69. My most rewarding efforts after leaving Viet Nam was moving to this great State where I have been given great opportunities to succeed. I am the President of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Colorado, served and the President of the Baptist Minister Conference of Denver, I have a Doctoral degree in Biblical Studies. Worked in the U.S Postal Service as a Letter carrier for 30 years. In God we Trust is the official Motto of the United States, and it is also on the legal tender for all debts, public and private. My family and I urge passage of SB23-025 along with family and my fellow veterans. Many that I have spoken to about this bill support it and would be more than happy to purchase the plates when they come available.</p> <p>Thank you so very much for your time.</p> <p>Respectfully Submitted</p> <p>Dr. Johnny Jenkins 14663 E. Purdue Pl, Aurora, Co. 80014</p>
Stephen Riecks For themselves	<p>Stephen C. Riecks</p> <p>Regarding Senate Bill 23-025</p> <p>My name is Steve Riecks. I am a graphic artist living and working in Highlands Ranch, Colorado. I have been a resident of this great state for</p>

	<p>over 50 years. I am strongly in favor of the passing of Senate Bill 23-025, which would make available to drivers in Colorado, a Special "In God We Trust" license plate!</p> <p>My father served in the United States Air Force and retired as a Lt. Colonel while serving at Lowry Air Force Base. My daughter and son-in-law are presently First Lieutenants in the U.S. Air Force. I personally have been blessed to travel to over 22 countries around the world. All of this has reinforced my thankfulness, that Colorado residents and United States citizens have the freedom to express our beliefs... whether religious, political, or social.</p> <p>I have a strong love for God, the United States, and Colorado. This license plate would be a great addition to the many other options available to thousands of Colorado residents. People who support "In God We Trust" deserve to have their voices included and represented. Colorado would be the 25th state to have this option.</p> <p>I was honored to be selected to create the design for this "In God We Trust" license plate. I would be proud to have it on my vehicle, as would many of my family members, friends and associates.</p> <p>Sincerely, Steve Riecks</p>
<p>Kathleen Chandler For themselves</p>	<p>Kathleen Chandler</p> <p>PERSONAL TESTIMONY</p> <p>Before the Colorado Senate Transportation & Energy Committee (January 23, 2023)</p> <p>Madam Chair and members of the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee, I am Kathleen Chandler, a 4th generation Colorado native and strong believer in our common heritage. I passionately support Senate Bill 23-025 that creates a Special "In God We Trust" License Plate for Colorado. I am honored to be here and support this worthy endeavor.</p> <p>In the way of background related to this Legislation, my family strongly supports our founding Father's commitment securing the rights of the individual to worship or not. It is not the right of government to grant that</p>

permission. It is the inherent right of the individual to have freedom of conscience. To deny that American’s forefathers were guided by religious freedom and their conviction that there is a God, a creator, is to deny the very words we have based our society on.

With that said, I am excited to add the In God We Trust license plate as an expression of that sentiment.

Today there are license plates for just about any free expression, from Adopt a Shelter Pet to Support Education to Wildlife Sporting. Yet there is no license plate for the support of God, the creator, Who our very country acknowledges in our founding documents? It is time. It is time to add this as a choice. This is a free expression of one’s values. No one is forcing anyone to purchase this plate, but to have it available.

“In God We Trust” is the Official National Motto of the United States. It appears on our paper money, coins, in courtrooms, and on government and state office buildings in Colorado. It is appropriate, fitting, and timely that Colorado creates an “In God We Trust” Special License Plate. There are many choices for license plates, and this should be one of them.

My family and I urge passage of SB23-025 as do many other Coloradans. We all look forward to purchasing and displaying the plate as soon as it is available. All we are asking for is the choice afforded many others that choose to express their values on their cars through the support the diverse license plates available today.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Chandler

John P. Priecko
PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Before the Colorado Senate Transportation & Energy Committee
(January 23, 2023)

Madam Chair and members of the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee, I am John Priecko, a Colorado Resident, and strong advocate for Senate Bill 23-025 that creates a Special *"In God We Trust"* License Plate for Colorado. I am honored to be here and support this worthy endeavor.

I am a grateful and proud Military veteran who served 25 years as a Pilot in the United States Air Force. Features of my career include a tour of duty on the Joint Staff in the Pentagon as the Chief of Strategic Operations and Training. Another highlight is serving as a B-1 Squadron Commander and Instructor Pilot.

The most rewarding efforts after my Military career, are as the Vice President, Global Trade Compliance, with J.P. Morgan Chase and Company. Additionally, and currently, I am the President and Managing Partner of Trade Compliance Solutions, a Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business.

In the way of background related to this Legislation, my wife Sandy and I moved here from Northern Virginia in July 2019, to be closer to our two adult sons. When we registered our vehicle, we discovered Colorado did not have an *"In God We Trust"* or similar license plate as we did in Virginia and twenty-three other states.

In June of 2020, I attended an Independence Institute sponsored Leadership Conference in Denver and met Kurt Huffman from State Representative Mark Baisley's Office. A lunch time discussion with Kurt that day is the catalyst for this Special License Plate initiative. This full-size artist's concept represents what we envision as a very professional and visually appealing end-product. We believe our design is the best out there.

"In God We Trust" is the Official National Motto of the United States. It appears on our paper money, coins, in courtrooms, and on government and state office buildings across America. It is appropriate, fitting, and timely that Colorado creates an *"In God We Trust"* Special License Plate. I am passionate about our Country, our Flag, our National Motto, and this important effort.

My family and I urge passage of SB23-025. Further, colleagues, coworkers, friends, fellow veterans, and neighbors also support this Bill. Likewise, those same people look forward to purchasing and displaying the plate as soon as it can be purchased. Many have said they would buy it now if it was available.

Respectfully Submitted,

John P. Priecko
In God We Trust Program Director
Colonel USAF (Retired)
Life Member: Air Force Association & Disabled American Veterans
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