



# Allegheny County Council

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## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**On agenda:** 7/1/2014      **Final action:**

**Title:** A Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, supporting the display of the National Motto, "In God We Trust" to be displayed above a replication of the Bill of Rights and to be hung in a prominent location in the Gold Room of the Allegheny County Courthouse.

**Sponsors:** Sue Means, Chuck Martoni, John Palmiere, Ed Kress, Heather Heidelbaugh, Tom Baker

**Indexes:**

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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/9/2014	1	County Council	Defeated due to lack of second	Fail
8/28/2014	1	Committee on Government Reform	Amended and Affirmatively Recommended as Amended	
7/1/2014	1	County Council	Referred by Chair	

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, supporting the display of the National Motto, "In God We Trust" to be displayed, together with other historically significant phrases and the motto of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, above a replication of the Bill of Rights and to be hung in a prominent location in the Gold Room of the Allegheny County Courthouse.

**WHEREAS**, April 2014 marked the 150th anniversary of our national motto "In God We Trust" on our coins which was first introduced to the nation by Francis Scott Key in 1814 as words to be included in our national anthem; and

**WHEREAS**, IN GOD WE TRUST became the United States national motto on July 30, 1956, shortly after our nation led the world through the trauma of World War II; and

**WHEREAS**, the words have been used on U.S. currency since 1864 having been placed there by a native Pennsylvanian, James Pollock who served as the 13<sup>th</sup> Governor of Pennsylvania and was appointed as the Director of the U.S. Mint by Abraham Lincoln; and

**WHEREAS**, the same inspiring slogan is engraved above the entrance to the United States Senate Chamber as well as above the Speaker's dais in the U.S. House of Representatives; and

**WHEREAS**, in both war and peace, these words have been a profound source of strength and guidance to many generations of Americans serving as part of the history and heritage of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, On July 24, 2000, the United States House of Representatives, along with the concurrence of the Senate, unanimously resolved to encourage the display of the national motto of the United States in public buildings throughout the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Assembly enacted House Bill 1728 of 2013 which is known as the National Motto Display Act which attempts to increase understanding of and familiarity with American historical documents and requests that important excerpts of the documents be prominently displayed in public buildings; and

**WHEREAS**, the national motto originated in Pennsylvania and is a true PA history story; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to the national motto officially adopted in 1956, the phrase “e pluribus unum,” (“out of many, one”) appears on the Great Seal of the United States as adopted by Act of Congress in 1782, and on United States currency together with “in God we trust” to this day; and

**WHEREAS**, although never adopted by Act of Congress, “e pluribus unum” was widely considered a *de facto* motto of the United States until 1956; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania officially adopted the motto “virtue, liberty and independence” in 1875, although it has been used in the Commonwealth’s coat of arms since 1778; and

**WHEREAS**, in following the recommendation of the Commonwealth, the County desires to display these patriotic and historically significant statements in the Council Chambers of the Gold Room as a way to solemnize public occasions and celebrate our history as a state and nation;

## ***The Council of the County of Allegheny hereby resolves as follows:***

### ***SECTION 1.***

Council determines that the historic and patriotic words of our national motto, “In God We Trust,” together with the historically significant phrases described in the preamble to this resolution, shall be permanently and prominently displayed above a replication of the Bill of Rights in the Gold Room of the County Courthouse of Allegheny in a fashion that provides a brief explanation of the historical significance and context of each phrase. Such display shall be designed in keeping with the both the historical character of the Gold Room and the uses to which the room is put, shall not in any way impair access to or use of the Gold Room, and may occupy an area no larger than three (3) square feet.

***SECTION 2. Severability.*** If any provision of this Resolution shall be determined to be unlawful, invalid, void or unenforceable, then that provision shall be considered severable from the remaining provisions of this Resolution which shall be in full force and effect.

***SECTION 3. Repealer.*** Any Resolution or Ordinance or part thereof conflicting with the provisions of this Ordinance is hereby repealed so far as the same affects this Ordinance.

***SPONSORED BY COUNCIL MEMBERS MEANS, MARTONI, PALMIERE, KRESS,  
HEIDELBAUGH***