

08/19/2025

From: Isaura Macias <isaura.macias85@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2025 2:05 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Cc: District 4
Subject: Urgent Community Concern: Oppose Policy No. 80 & "In God We Trust" Signage

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Report Suspicious

Dear Members of the Board,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to two items currently before the Board: the proposed installation of "In God We Trust" signage in the Board chambers and the adoption of Administrative Policy No. 80.

Regarding the signage: While I understand that the phrase "In God We Trust" is the national motto, incorporating overtly religious language into government spaces is exclusionary. Our chambers should reflect the full diversity of Fresno County's population, including people of many faiths and those of no religious affiliation. Public institutions should represent all constituents equally and remain secular in order to uphold the First Amendment and foster an inclusive environment.

I am also deeply concerned about the adoption of Administrative Policy No. 80. This policy, as proposed, would require Board approval for any departmental spending on community events, regardless of amount, and would impose prohibitions on the types of events or programs the County may participate in or fund. This is a direct response to Supervisor Garry Bredefeld's expressed opposition to the Department of Public Health's participation in Pride events — events where vital outreach services, including access to health resources and prophylactics, are provided to vulnerable communities.

The policy's vague language and the fact that the process details will be developed through an internal administrative directive — which will not be available to the public — are troubling. This lack of transparency raises serious concerns about accountability and public oversight.

If implemented, Policy No. 80 could significantly disrupt the delivery of essential services and outreach by adding unnecessary bureaucracy, delaying action, and enabling the Board to block participation in events based on political or ideological bias — even when such participation is aligned with department missions and public health mandates. It could also result in higher costs to the County due to increased staff time and administrative burdens.

I urge you to reject both the proposed signage and Administrative Policy No. 80. These actions would undermine the County's commitment to equity, transparency, and efficient governance.

Thank you for your time and attention to these important matters.

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2025 2:01 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Matthew Armstrong
Email Address: afarensis16@yahoo.com

Subject: "In God We Trust" in city buildings

Message:

Re: the proposal to inscribe "In God We Trust" in meeting chambers, this is simply money being spent that need not be spent. This proposal serves no purpose other than to let Bredefield pretend to be tough and pious when he is neither. Save the money for things that Fresno actually needs.

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2025 2:19 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Steven Ragnetti
Email Address: stevenragnetti@gmail.com

Subject: Tuesday August 19th 2025 Board of Supervisors Agenda #6

Message:

In opposition to Item 6. Supervisor Bredefeld should not be pushing religion into politics once again. He did this at the Fresno City Council, and now he's trying to do it here. Performative, and a waste of money. Please remind him what separation of church and state is.

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2025 7:15 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Edward Stewart
Email Address: stewed01@gmail.com

Subject: Upcoming Agenda Item 6, 8/19

Message:

The county of Fresno should not put In God We Trust on the wall of the Board of Supervisors meeting room. This is not appropriate as our government is a secular entity, and the belief in God is not held by all citizens of the county of Fresno. As a homeowner, taxpayer and voter, I am against this.

From: Angelia Quirk <angelia.quirk@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2025 8:34 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Opposition to "In God We Trust" Resolution

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Dear Clerk of the Board,

I'm writing to oppose this resolution, which would display "In God We Trust" in the Fresno County Board of Supervisors Chambers.

While this phrase is the national motto, placing it in our government chambers risks suggesting a religious preference, undermining the constitutional principle of religious neutrality. Fresno County is home to people of many faiths and those with none, and our public spaces should reflect inclusivity for all residents.

Symbolic gestures like this can divide rather than unite. I respectfully urge the Board to reject the resolution and choose the alternative action of not approving the display.

Thank you for considering my comment.

Sincerely,

Angelia Quirk

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2025 1:25 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Kaylia Metcalfe
Email Address: kayliamariem@gmail.com

Subject: In God We Trust

Message:

Please keep your religion out of government. Your god is not everyone's god, and to pretend otherwise is a huge slap in the face of your constituents. This is a waste of time, energy, and money. There are far more important things for the BOS to be working on.

From: Rachel Youdelman <rachel27@berkeley.edu>
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 9:43 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Fwd: Opposition to Aug 19 Agenda Item 6

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I am forwarding this email per the error message re the invalidity of the "BOScomments@fresnocountyca.gov" address.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rachel Youdelman** <rachel27@berkeley.edu>
Date: Mon, Aug 18, 2025 at 9:38 AM
Subject: Opposition to Aug 19 Agenda Item 6
To: Magsig, Nathan <nmagsig@fresnocountyca.gov>, BOSComments <BOScomments@fresnocountyca.gov>

Supervisor Magsig:

I'm writing as your constituent regarding the proposed installation of a religious sign inside the BOS meeting chamber (Aug 19 2025, Agenda Item 6).

As yet another solution in search of a problem, it is unnecessary in every way. I strongly oppose the unwarranted expense, particularly considering the current county budget deficit, not to speak of the already surplus religious sentiment of the fervent evangelical invocations which precede every meeting.

National motto or not, many find it objectionable, and no sufficient justification has been made for plastering it on the chamber wall, other than "it's the national motto," "it's not illegal," and "others have done it."

Rachel Youdelman, Clovis 93612

--
Rachel Youdelman
rachel27@berkeley.edu

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 7:32 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Ron Champ
Email Address: Buzzter1@yahoo.com

Subject: In God We Trust display

Message:
I object to requiring In God We Trust to be displayed at all county supervisory meetings. There are more issues facing Fresno that need to be addressed.

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2025 8:38 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Kyle M
Email Address: Noneofyourbusiness@gmail.com

Subject: Separation of Church and State

Message:

Why the actual fuck is one of our elected governmental officials wanting to put “ In God We Trust” in the chambers of this Board? What if some of the people that this chamber represents choose to not believe in God? What would that tell them? Fresno is screwed with fascist leaders like these.

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Saturday, August 16, 2025 11:52 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Michael Banti
Email Address: mbanti@gmail.com

Subject: "In God We Trust" in Fresno County Chambers with upcoming agenda item

Message:

Why does Bredefeld feel the need to push his religious agenda on everyone else? There are more important things that this county needs to worry about and all he can do is this? Please let this not be ratified. This violates the First Amendment with freedom of religion.

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Saturday, August 16, 2025 5:36 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Theo Hobbs
Email Address: theo_hobbs@hotmail.com

Subject: Adding God Reference

Message:

This is not at all appropriate. It's that simple. Religious beliefs should not be posted on the wall in the boardroom.

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Saturday, August 16, 2025 8:16 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Kelsey Duncanson
Email Address: kelseyjduncanson@gmail.com

Subject: Aug 19th number 9 on the agenda

Message:
Gerry Bredefeld's agenda item 9 to add "in god we trust" is a clear violation of separation of church and state. One Fresno encompasses many religious and non religious beliefs. This would not be One Fresno!

From: dohdoh.lyfe <dohdoh.lyfe@proton.me>
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 12:30 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Regarding Aug. 19th Board Meeting. Urgent
Attachments: FADB9E55-D868-4E08-B574-AB9A22EEB0DE.jpg

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Greetings,

We are a group of mostly retired professionals and life-long Fresno County residents. We participate in a variety of groups with other professionals doing good works for the community at large. We do this in our city, for our city, for all its people.

We are deeply concerned with an item on your agenda that is coming up which, many of us believe, is antithetical to the spirit of community as well as divisive.

The vote we refer to is on the upcoming Aug. 19th agenda. We are strongly encouraging our elected board members to vote NO on Item #6.

We strongly believe that Garry Bredefeld's reason for introducing this item is not about displaying the motto:

"serve as a unifying statement, expressing trust in higher ideals and reinforcing the County's commitment to foundational principles such as justice, liberty, and service to the people."

It is more about him pushing his religious and political beliefs onto a heterogeneous body of people's, as evidenced by his obsession with

Pride Month and limiting which holidays county employees can and cannot celebrate, amongst a litany of other things.

Our groups come from many faiths and some with none, but each individuals belief system is personal and woven together into the fabric of this city, strengthening our community.

We ask, which God does Mr. Bredefeld want us to put our trust in? His God we presume.

There are just too many Gods involved in this community and we wonder if they will all have a say at this meeting and whether their creed will also be written for all to see and read.

We still have freedom of religion and, freedom from religions. We have no problem with people praying to their own God in their home or Church. But we cannot tolerate one man's attempt to force a singular religion down our community's throats. Much blood was shed and lives lost in the pursuit of our rights to be free of tyrants, even at the local level of governance.

We urge the esteemed board members to vote a resounding NO on Item 6. To spend district money on an obvious political play would be a gross miscarriage.

Let sense and reason carry the day. Not theatre and grandstanding.

Thank you,

Concerned Citizens of Fresno



From: Christy Tchaparian <christytchaparian@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 1:25 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: public comment, agenda item #6

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Public comment in regards to agenda item #6...

I am writing in response to Supervisor Bredefeld's proposal. Adding "In God We Trust" to government signage sends a message that favors one religious worldview and risks excluding members of our diverse community, including those of minority faiths or no faith. Public institutions like council and board chambers belong equally to all of us, and no one should feel like an outsider because of their beliefs. Our government should foster inclusion and equal belonging, not division. Thank you.

From: Brandi Nuse-Villegas <brandiangela78@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 7:53 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Public comment, 08/19/25, item 6

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I ask you to consider the whole of our community and oppose this item.

Fresno County is a richly culturally diverse area, with many ethnic groups represented, and that a point of pride and something that the board should demonstrate intentional respect.

Within our county there are people from multiple faith traditions that are monotheistic while there are also many of those who don't hold a monotheistic religious belief, from a wide array of cultures, who are equal as constituents and leaders. Council and board chambers are public institutions that belong equally to all members of the community, regardless of religion or creed.

As well, there is diversity among people of faith and there are different views regarding this item; including those who don't agree with the placement of this signage in the chambers, for a variety of reasons.

This, being a permanent sign in the chambers asserting a particular religious statement and belief, however broad, would show that the county is choosing not to represent or recognize all constituents and decision makers in this space.

What is notable to this item from the previous BOS meeting is that Bredefeld and Magsig referred to the county's flag policy, which was created to limit the display of flags to only represent our national, state, and veterans, with the idea of not representing any other groups and that these flags are the most inclusive. This signage seems to go against this perspective. It seems to also not be reflective of the Fresno County Guidelines and Mission.

The different facets of diversity in community can be shown through the many celebrations and acknowledgements that happen throughout the year that represent a diverse community, which do not assert a county wide identification with what is celebrated, such as various cultural celebrations.

Like the items regarding celebrations, this is an opportunity and a necessity of the board to show that you and the county represent all constituents.

From: Jessica Bower <incarabbit@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 8:33 PM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: 08/19 BOS Meeting - Public Comment - Item #6 & Item #8

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Hello,

I am unable to make it in person to this board meeting and would like to comment on item #6 "National Motto" and on item #8 "Whole Person Harm Reduction Program".

Item #6 **should not** be approved as written. Much like the Board did with Item #6 on 07/08/25 to declare support of the Second Amendment, I believe they can declare their support for the National Motto, but I do not believe it should be displayed in the Board's chambers.

1. First, displaying the national motto on the walls of the chamber is an inappropriate use of District 2's public funding. This is waste, fraud, and abuse. Funding spent on this useless sign could go towards improving County island roads, sidewalks, green space, etc. within District 2 and go towards the constituents of the district.
2. Second, this wasteful display would not be a "unifying statement" as the agenda item claims. The County serves a wide variety of religions and the motto would be inadvertently excluding people who are polytheist, atheist, or omnist and display a religious preference to monotheism. As a Christian, I suggest the person who submitted this board agenda item read Matthew 6:5-6.
3. Third, if the Board truly wants to go through with wasting District 2 funds and excluding people of other religious backgrounds to displaying the motto on their chamber walls as "it will align with the long-standing national tradition and mirrors similar actions taken by local cities", then I believe the Board should wait until the remaining 5 of the 15 incorporated cities within Fresno County (Clovis, Firebaugh, Kingsburg, Mendota, and San Joaquin), who have yet to adopted the motto, have voted to also adopt to display the motto in their chambers. It wouldn't be very unifying if the County steps over the cities heads in adopting this before they have a chance to.

Item #8 **should** be approved as written. I saw the story on the Whole Person Harm Reduction Program and this item on the news yesterday and I do not approve of Mr. Bredefeld taking such a negative viewpoint on this matter that would greatly benefit the community. As a public figure, I expected him to have more decorum when being interviewed. He should be listening to the experts and what the community wants and not preemptively judging the program before it even begins. We should let this pilot program run and, when the time for renewal comes up, we can let the results tell us if the program is working in our community or not.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jessica

From: District 5
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:40 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: FW: In God We Trust

From: KIM GIESBRECHT <kgesbrek@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:39 AM
To: District 5 <district5@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: In God We Trust

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Mr. Magsig
I live in the 93611 zip code.
I am your constituent.
I am requesting that you vote NO on Mr. Brederfield's request to hang an "In God We Trust" sign in the chambers.
Keep religion out of politics.
Not all of your constituents practice .
Our country was founded on separation of Church and State. Please remember that.
Respectfully
Kim Giesbrecht

From: Lydia Vasquez <vasquezlydia@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:24 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: 08/19/2025 BOS MEETING ITEM 6

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Good morning-

I am writing in today to give my comment on item 6 on today's agenda 8/19/25- I wish I was able to attend in person to say my comments publicly but I work 8-5pm and am unable to attend.

I **strongly oppose** Fresno BOS adding 'in god we trust' signage for the board chambers. First and foremost it goes against the county of Fresno Mission and Guidelines, and our constitution. A reminder that under the first amendment we have freedom of religion and the US constitution prohibits the government from establishing a religion. The slogan 'in god we trust' conveys a preference for a religious worldview, whether that was the intention or not. Such messaging risks marginalizing members of our community with different beliefs, including those of minority faiths or no faith. Council and board chambers are public institutions that belong equally to ALL members of the community, regardless of religion or creed. No one should be made to feel like an outsider in these spaces simply because they do not share the majority's religious views. Government institutions should foster a sense of equal belonging, not exclusion. Our communities are religiously diverse, encompassing many different faiths as well as non-faith traditions.

Please do not add 'in god we trust' to the board chambers.

-Lydia Vasquez
93720

From: noreply@opencities.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:23 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: Contact Clerk of the Board Form Submitted

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Form Submission - Contact Clerk of the Board

Name: Abigail

Email Address:

Subject: Board Meeting Comment for In God We Trust and Needle Exchange

Message:

Have Garry take the Ethics for Local Officials - California AB 1234 course. 1. Use your position only to advance public interest, not for personal gain. 2. Make decisions on merit, free from prejudice... 4. Follow democratic principles and honor the spirit of the law.

From: District 5
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:36 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: FW: Comment on Upcoming Agenda item

From: Sara Smith <saramarie08@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 6:03 AM
To: District 5 <district5@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: Comment on Upcoming Agenda item

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Mr. Magsig,

I saw that a recent agenda item includes adding “In God We Trust” to the council chambers above where to Board sits. I am opposed to this item because this violates the Board’s own guidelines. Under “Respecting Diversity,” the Board commits to “[acknowledging] the rich cultural and ethnic communities of our region”. By placing “God” above all else in the council chamber, the Board is placing an emphasis on Christianity above all other cultures and not “Respecting and embracing ethnic and cultural diversity” that make up our great county.

There are so many other religions and even non-religious folks whom the Board are elected to serve, and placing one religion above all others is disrespectful and harmful to the communities that make our county so amazing.

Lastly, there are many very pressing issues that need the Supervisors’ attention, and this topic is not something I expect my tax dollars to be used in debate. We have real issues and real problems that need to be solved, and this is a waste of time and resources. Please spend your valuable time working on issues that actually impact the citizens you are elected to serve instead of on frivolous “beautification” issues that don’t positively impact the lives of the people you are there to serve.

Regards,
Sara Smith
Resident

From: Rush, Bret
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:37 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: FW: Public comment regarding item 6, 08/19/25

From: District 5
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:37 AM
To: Magsig, Nathan <nmagsig@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: FW: Public comment regarding item 6, 08/19/25

From: Brandi Nuse-Villegas <brandiangel78@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 4:44 PM
To: District 1 <district1@fresnocountyca.gov>; District 3 <district3@fresnocountyca.gov>; District 4 <district4@fresnocountyca.gov>; District 5 <district5@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: Public comment regarding item 6, 08/19/25

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While I know that many other jurisdictions have included the verbage “In God We Trust,” I wish to ask you to consider the whole of our community and oppose this item.

What is notable to this item from the previous BOS meeting is that Bredefeld and Magsig referred to the county’s flag policy, which was created to limit the display of flags to only represent our national, state, and veterans, with the idea of not representing any other groups and that these flags are the most inclusive. This signage seems to go against this perspective. It seems to also not be reflective of the Fresno County Guidelines and Mission.

In Fresno County there are multiple faith traditions that are monotheistic that are held by many residents while there are also many of those who don’t hold a monotheistic religious belief, from a wide array of cultures, as our community is richly culturally and ethnically diverse, who are equal as constituents and leaders.

As well, among those who are monotheistic, those who consider themselves people of faith, there are different views regarding this item; including those who don’t agree with the placement of this signage in the chambers, for a variety of reasons, including consideration for our neighbors.

This, being a permanent sign in the chambers asserting a particular religious statement and belief, however broad, would show that the county is choosing not to represent or recognize all constituents and decision makers in this space. Council and board chambers are public institutions that belong equally to all members of the community, regardless of religion or creed.

The different facets of diversity in community can be shown through the many celebrations and acknowledgements that happen throughout the year that represent a diverse community, which do not assert a county wide identification with what is celebrated, such as various cultural celebrations.

Like the items regarding celebrations, this is an opportunity and a necessity of the board to show that you and the county represent all constituents.

From: District 5
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:37 AM
To: Clerk/BOS
Subject: FW: In God We Trust

From: Michelle DeLaBarre < michelle.delabarre@gmail.com >
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 4:31 PM
To: District 5 < district5@fresnocountyca.gov >
Subject: In God We Trust

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Please vote against the resolution to include "In God We Trust" in the county chambers. The principle of separation of Church and State demands that our governance be free from religion. In a very concrete way, putting this phrase in our governing chambers effectively excludes some of our county residents.

Our country was founded on freedom of thought, belief, and religion. Please don't make our little part patently Christian.

I must also point out another problem with passage of this resolution. It appears to narrow "God" to the Judeo-Christian concept as evidenced by the historical references Bredefeld is relying upon. The resolution has excluded Buddha, Allah, Vishnu, Nzame, Inyan, Ame-no-Minakanushi, and so on. As many cultures we have in Fresno County, is as many Gods our peoples worship.

I would encourage inclusion instead of exclusion. Vote no on this resolution.

Michelle R. DeLaBarre,
District 5 Resident