



**For Immediate Release:**

## **Disappointment in Governor Deal's Veto of the Free Exercise Protection Act**

**DULUTH, GEORGIA – March 28, 2016** – Georgia Baptists are disappointed that Governor Nathan Deal has chosen not to listen to the voices of Georgians, and to veto HB 757, the “Free Exercise Protection Act.” This legislation, in keeping with the United States Constitution, guarantees our right to “exercise” religion and provides the ability to live and work consistent with our deeply held religious convictions.

In today’s culture, a growing trend is rising where people of faith are not given the ability to live out their faith in the public square, even bullied by those who do not share those long-standing and traditional values and morals. John 15:18-19 says: <sup>18</sup>“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. <sup>19</sup>If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of this world. That is why the world hates you.” In addition, Romans 12:2 states <sup>2</sup>“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

As Christians we are obligated to love all people daily and share the Gospel, while at the same time, we should not be discriminated against because of our beliefs, nor forced to support any and all messages in today’s progressive culture. This is why religious protections have been enacted at the federal level and in over 30 other states.

“Georgia Baptists across the state have been praying for this protection for 3 years,” stated Dr. J. Robert White, Executive Director of the Georgia Baptist Mission Board. “While we respect the Governor, it is unfortunate that he has chosen to veto protections for people of faith in Georgia.”

Georgia Baptists express appreciation to Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle, Speaker David Ralston and the many men and women of the Senate and House of Representatives who listened to their constituents and worked diligently over the past three years for religious liberty legislation in Georgia.

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### **About Georgia Baptist Convention**

The Georgia Baptist Convention is made up of autonomous, cooperating churches that partner together through the Cooperative Program, special mission offerings and mission efforts to share Jesus Christ across Georgia, throughout North America, and around the world. Churches give through the Cooperative Program and the State Missions Offering to support the missionaries and ministries of the Georgia Baptist Convention. In turn, Georgia state missionaries provide assistance, training, encouragement, and support for the ministries of Georgia Baptist churches and associations. <http://www.gabaptist.org/>

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