



## Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Rep. Shuler Sends Letter Over Architect of the Capitol's Prohibition of "God" on Flag Certificates**

*Washington, D.C.* – Representative Heath Shuler today sent a letter to the Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi asking her to examine the policies and procedures of the Architect of the Capitol that prevent the word "God," or any other religious reference on the certificates that accompany flags flown over the Capitol.

The rules of the Architect specifically state that, "...religious expressions are not permitted on the flag certificate."

The rule on religious language in certificates had been formalized in 2003, according to a statement released by House Administration Committee Chairman Robert Brady and reported in *The Hill* (10/9/07).

In his letter, Rep. Shuler pointed out that the Congress has passed numerous resolutions recognizing the importance of religion in the lives of Americans and that the House of Representatives clearly supports the right of the people to openly practice their faith.

The full text of Rep. Shuler's letter to Speaker Pelosi is below.

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Dear Madame Speaker:

It has undoubtedly come to your attention that the Architect of the Capitol currently has rules in place that prevent U.S. citizens from having the word "God," or any other religious references on the certificates that accompany flags flown over the Capitol. The rules of the Architect specifically state that, "...political and/or religious expressions are not permitted on the flag certificate."

It is impossible to imagine how a young man requesting a flag be flown over the Capitol for his grandfather in honor of his "dedication and love of God, Country and family" could be censored by the acting Architect. Yet, this is exactly what happened to Paul

Larochelle of Ohio. I believe that this restriction is an unnecessary restriction on our citizens' right to openly and freely practice their religion.

In the past this body has passed numerous resolutions recognizing the importance of religion in the lives of Americans. Whether these resolutions honor Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, or any other religion, it is clear that the People's House supports the right of the people to openly practice their faith.

Additionally, our Nation and our people have always recognized the importance of God. "In God we Trust" is on our currency. The oath of office each of us took ends with "so help me God." The Supreme Court opens with "God save the United States and this Honorable Court."

As a person of faith and an elected member of this Congress, I strongly disagree with the Architect's prohibition of the word "God" from flag certificates and ask that you examine the authority under which he is making this policy.

Respectfully,

Heath Shuler  
Member of Congress