



# Sen. Todd Gollihare

## R-Kellyville, District 12

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### ***Gollihare Champions Bill to Shield Worship Services from Disruption***

**OKLAHOMA CITY** — Legislation authored by Senator Todd Gollihare, R-Kellyville to modernize and strengthen protections for religious liberty in Oklahoma advanced this week, reinforcing a constitutional right first granted by the Founding Fathers and enshrined in Oklahoma law for more than a century.

[Senate Bill 743](#) updates and strengthens existing state law to deter intentional disruptions of religious services. The bill expands the definition of criminal disturbance to include protests or demonstrations that lack proper licensure, ensuring houses of worship remain protected spaces for peaceful assembly. It also establishes clear consequences: a first offense would be a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in county jail and a \$500 fine, while repeat offenses would rise to felony status with penalties of up to two years in state prison and a \$1,000 fine.

“This bill started out as a prostitution-related measure, but it quickly evolved into something far greater,” Gollihare said. “Senate Bill 743 went from a John bill to a Saint John bill. At its core, this is about ensuring Oklahomans have the freedom to gather and worship without fear of willful disruption, intimidation, or unlawful interference.”

The right to religious freedom is not only the opening line of the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights — it was also among the first laws enacted in Oklahoma after statehood. The current statute has remained virtually untouched since 1910.

“It’s long past time we bring this law into the 21st century,” Gollihare said. “As threats to faith-based gatherings grow more sophisticated, so must our commitment to protecting them. SB 743 sends a clear message: Oklahoma will always defend the right to worship freely and peacefully.”

The measure now awaits consideration by the House of Representatives.

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