

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
November 14, 2018

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## **Amazon Selects Two RFRA States State Organizations and Legislators Speak Out**

Amazon announced that it would split its second headquarters between Long Island City, New York, and Crystal City, Virginia, with an operations outpost in Nashville, Tennessee. During Georgia's intense pursuit of the second HQ, Georgians of faith were repeatedly warned that they could not have their religious freedom protected via a Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), because Amazon would never locate in a state that has a RFRA.

Amazon's announcement shows the speciousness of that argument: Two of the three states selected by Amazon (Virginia and Tennessee) have RFRA's.

This development demonstrates yet again that major corporations locate in areas that are best for their bottom line. They consider business climate, taxes, transportation, workforce, and numerous other factors – but they don't make multi-billion-dollar decisions based on whether religious liberty is protected by a particular statute. We trust that Amazon's announcement will finally put to rest the bogus argument that passing a RFRA will drive away business. We also urge the Georgia legislature to quickly enact legislation that tracks the time-tested language of the federal RFRA, to protect Georgians' fundamental right to free exercise of religion.

"This announcement confirms yet again that protecting citizens' free exercise of religion is not an impediment to economic development," said State Representative Sam Teasley, House sponsor of RFRA legislation. "Language like the Religious Freedom Restoration Act passed in Congress (1993) has always been about restricting government power as it relates to burdening a person's free exercise of religion. States that have that protection can clearly compete and win in this competitive economic climate."

State Senator Josh McKoon, Senate sponsor of RFRA legislation, said this: "The results of the Amazon HQ2 Sweepstakes are the clearest evidence yet that protecting religious freedom is not an albatross for state economic development. Amazon selected Nashville, Tennessee and Crystal City, Virginia, communities situated in states with Religious Freedom Restoration Act statutes, for the location of facilities employing a total of 30,000 people. Despite the clamoring of self-appointed representatives of the business community here in Georgia to the contrary, today's announcement shows we don't have to choose between civil rights and economic development."

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