AN ACT
relating to the prohibited suspension of laws protecting religious
freedom and prohibited closure of places of worship.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 110.001(a), Civil Practice and Remedies
Code, is amended by adding Subdivisions (3) and (4) to read as
follows:

(3) "Place of worship" means a building or grounds
where religious activities are conducted.

(4) "Public official" means any elected or appointed
officer, employee, or agent of this state or any political
subdivision, board, commission, bureau, or other public body
established by law.

SECTION 2. Section 110.002, Civil Practice and Remedies
Code, is amended by adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(d) For purposes of a state of disaster declared under
Chapter 418, Government Code:

(1) this chapter is not considered a regulatory
statute; and

(2) a provision of this chapter may not be suspended.

SECTION 3. Chapter 110, Civil Practice and Remedies Code,
is amended by adding Section 110.0031 to read as follows:

Sec. 110.0031. PROHIBITION ON ORDERS CLOSING PLACES OF
WORSHIP. A government agency or public official may not issue an
SECTION 4. Section 110.004, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 110.004. DEFENSE. A person whose free exercise of religion has been substantially burdened in violation of Section 110.003 or 110.0031 may assert that violation as a defense in a judicial or administrative proceeding without regard to whether the proceeding is brought in the name of the state or by any other person.

SECTION 5. Chapter 110, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, as amended by this Act, applies only to a claim or defense that accrues on or after the effective date of this Act. A claim or defense that accrued before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.
H.B. No. 1239

President of the Senate        Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1239 was passed by the House on April 9, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 122, Nays 22, 1 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 1239 on May 28, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 113, Nays 30, 1 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1239 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 21, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 28, Nays 3.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: ____________________

Date

_________________________
Governor