Good morning everyone, and thank you for being here. We're here to talk about efforts by a group of young Texans to express their beliefs. The core of what brings us here today is the simplest of ideas and the most fundamental of principles: In America, people are free to express their religious beliefs. That basic tenet, that cherished freedom, is so fundamental to the United States, it's frankly astonishing that, here in the 21st century, we have to go to court to fight for it. In Texas, we're lucky to have an attorney general willing to fight those battles, and I applaud General Abbott for his efforts to support and liberate the people of our state to worship, or even simply make a reference to their religion, as they see fit. I'd like to have General Abbott now say a few words about his latest efforts to secure religious liberty for Texans. General?

[ABBOTT SPEAKS]

Thank you, general. Once again, I'd like to thank you for your efforts, and I know the cheerleaders and students in Kountze feel that way, too. The underlying problem is there's a very vocal, and very litigious, minority of Americans willing to legally attack anybody who dares utter a phrase, or even a name, they don't agree with. In a twisting of logic, many of these people insist on silencing the religious in the cause of tolerance. Where's the tolerance in that? Where's the tolerance in threatening school officials, or entire districts, simply because some cheerleaders at a football game paint Biblical phrases on a banner? These students, or anyone expressing their faith, should be celebrated. In this day and age of instant gratification, and our me-first culture, they're thinking of a world larger than themselves, and attempting to inspire their fellow students. Instead, the message they're being sent is to quiet down, keep it to yourself. We are a nation built upon a free exchange of ideas. We are also a culture built upon the concept that the original law is God's law, outlined in the Ten Commandments, the moral basis for legal codes across our country and around the world. Somewhere along the way, we've lost our way, not to mention our common sense.
If you think about it, if the Kountze cheerleaders simply wanted to call a little attention to their faith and the Lord, they've ultimately succeeded in a whole lot more, and attracted a lot more attention than they'd bargained for.

I’d say sometimes, the Lord does work in mysterious ways.

As government leaders, we owe it to people of all religions to protect expressions of faith, to ensure everyone has the right to voice their opinions, and worship as they see fit.

During the upcoming session, we’ll continue to find ways to preserve religious expression, and explore ways to protect people of faith from this ongoing onslaught.

Any infringement upon that right is an insult to our great nation, and to those who have died to win and preserve these most vital freedoms.