

SBC resolution commends Obama, critiques policies

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LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Southern Baptists both commended President Barack Obama and expressed opposition to some of his policies in a resolution passed June 24 at their annual meeting in Louisville.

A resolution commending Obama for his “evident love for his family” and expressing “pride in our continuing progress toward racial reconciliation signaled by the election of Barack Hussein Obama” as president was one of five resolutions approved by 8,731 messengers.

While the Obama resolution commended him for retaining “many foreign policies that continue to keep our nation safe” it also said Southern Baptists “deplore” his decision to expand federal funding for “destructive human embryo research”; “decry” increased funding for pro-abortion groups; “oppose” any stripping of conscience protections for health care workers unwilling to participate in abortions; and “protest” any effort to “eradicate the symbols of our nation’s historic Judeo-Christian faith from public or private venues.”

The resolutions committee, chaired by Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Danny Akin, considered 26 resolutions during three days of deliberations prior to the annual meeting.

Other resolutions called on Southern Baptists to consider adopting some of the 150 million orphans who “now languish without families” around the world; affirmed biblical positions on marriage and sexual purity; commended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville on its 150th anniversary; and expressed appreciation for Southern Seminary personnel and others who worked on all the details to make the annual

meeting run smoothly.

In a later press conference, Akin said the Obama resolution “strikes a really good balance” for prayer for the president, affirming him and making plain disagreements with some of his policies.

Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission who served as a staff resource, said, “Race has been the serpent in the garden of America from the very beginning,” first with Native Americans, then with African-Americans. But, he said, since the racial reconciliation resolution passed by the SBC in 1995, the number of black members in Southern Baptist churches has increased 117 percent to almost 800,000.

“It would have been irresponsible not to speak to the election of the first African-American president,” Akin said. “We could affirm his election without affirming his policies where we have strong, strong disagreement.”

Southern Baptists have gone from being virtually an all white denomination “by choice” in 1970 to about 18 percent minority members now, according to Land.

The sexual purity resolution supports “the biblical definition of marriage as the exclusive union of a man and a woman:” rejects any attempt to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act; urges the U.S. Senate not to pass any legislation that would criminalize “deeply held religious beliefs and speech about homosexuality and other unbiblical sexual practices:” and supports the “current military code barring homosexuality in the military.”