

Texan Amanda Tyler named BJC executive director-elect

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WASHINGTON—The Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty board of directors named Amanda Tyler—an Austin native who has served on the staff of a Texas Congressman—as the next executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based religious liberty organization.

“Amanda Tyler is the right person to lead the BJC forward with grace and tenacity to defend and extend religious liberty in an ever-changing world,” said Daniel Glaze, who serves as the chair of the BJC Board of Directors and the chair of the Search and Succession Committee. “Amanda is an excellent and experienced communicator, and she has leadership qualities that complement the current staff and fit our vision in important ways.”

Tyler will be the sixth executive director in the Baptist Joint Committee’s 80-year history and the first woman to occupy the post. She will begin her tenure in January 2017, upon the retirement of Brent Walker.

“I truly believe that our entire world has never needed the Baptist Joint Committee as much as it does right now, and there is no limit to what God can do through us to preserve religious liberty for all people,” Tyler said. “I feel called by God to do this work.”

Tyler first connected to the Baptist Joint Committee while an undergraduate at Georgetown University. She volunteered in the office and later served on staff as assistant to the general counsel.

After graduating from The University of Texas School of Law, Amanda worked in private practice and served as a law clerk for a U.S. district court judge in Dallas. She later joined the staff of U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett

in Austin and Washington, D.C.

In Austin, Tyler served as the congressman's district director, leading the staff in the development and execution of an outreach agenda for a seven-county congressional district, as well as serving as a spokesperson for his office. She is currently Rep. Doggett's counsel for the Ways and Means Committee.

Throughout her career, Tyler continued to stay connected to the BJC. She is a long-time monthly financial supporter and served on the board from 2010-16.

During her time on the BJC staff in 1999-2001, she wrote columns for Report from the Capital, drafted statements on religious liberty issues, presented educational programs, and coordinated the broad coalition in support of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act.

A member of First Baptist Church of Washington, D.C., Amanda lives in the city with her husband, Robert Behrendt, and their son, Phelps.

"There are many challenges and opportunities surrounding our First Freedom, such as increasing religious pluralism and the unease it can bring," Tyler said. "The Baptist Joint Committee, with its rich history and deep expertise, is uniquely positioned to be a voice for all people who want to defend and extend God-given religious liberty for generations to come."