

ORDINANCE NO. 19-26

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE REQUIRING
THE ADORNMENT OF CITY-OWNED POLICE AND FIRE VEHICLES
WITH THE SLOGAN "IN GOD WE TRUST"**

WHEREAS, the City of Muncie has a number of city-owned vehicles for use by employees of the Muncie Police Department and the Muncie Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, the City of Muncie maintains the prerogative of decorating these vehicles in the way the City sees fit; and

WHEREAS, the motto "In God We Trust" is a meaningful, historical phrase derived from lyrics of Francis Scott Key's "The Star-Spangled Banner," specifically: "And this be our motto: In God is our trust," which has further been used by the United States on its currency, and has previously been utilized by the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the motto has withstood scrutiny under the First Amendment and courts have found that "through long historical use and repetition, the [motto] has lost profound sectarian religious significance, [and] function[s] instead as a form of ceremonial deism that reflects national tradition and solemn heritage rather than active religious coercion;" see *New Doe Child #1 v. Congress of the United States*, 891 F.3d 578 (6th Cir. 2018), see also *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, 134 S. Ct. 1811 (2014).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE, INDIANA:

SECTION 1: A new section, section 35.03, shall be added to Chapter 35, division 1 in Title 3 of the City of Muncie Code of Ordinances to read as follows:

All city-owned vehicles which are marked for the use of the police and fire department shall bear an additional decal which shall read "In God We Trust," as approved by the respective chiefs of the Police and Fire Departments.

Passed by the Common Council of the City of Muncie, Indiana, this ____ day of September, 2026.

	Yeas	Nays	Abstained	Absent
Jeff Green	_____	_____	_____	_____
Nora Powell	_____	_____	_____	_____
Brandon Garrett	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sara Gullion	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jerry Dishman	_____	_____	_____	_____
Harold Mason	_____	_____	_____	_____
Dale Basham	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ro Selvey	_____	_____	_____	_____
William McIntosh	_____	_____	_____	_____

President, Muncie Common Council

Presented by me to the Mayor for his approval, this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk

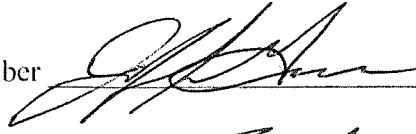
The above Resolution is approved/vetoed by me this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Dan Ridenour, Mayor of the City of Muncie

ATTEST:

Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk

This Ordinance is proposed by Council Member



This Ordinance is approved in form by Legal Counsel