OVERTURE 7 from the Westminster Presbytery (to OC)
"Concerning the Duties Required by the Second Commandment"

Whereas, it is the testimony of history and of Scripture (Deuteronomy 28ff, Proverbs 14:34) that Christianity produces nations that enjoy the blessings of wealth, peace, and productivity as compared to Islam which produces nations of poverty, tyranny, and oppression; and

Whereas, in the Bible, foreigners and aliens were to be treated with kindness, justice, and mercy, and so those individuals of other religions in the United States (and its States) such as Islam are to be respected as being made in the image of God, and treated with kindness, justice and mercy (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:33-34, Deut. 10: 18-19); and

Whereas, in the Bible, the first and primary action of a righteous king was to remove statutes and monuments to false gods (Jehu in 2 Kings 10:26-28; Hezekiah in 2 Kings 18:4; Josiah in 2 Kings 23:4-14; Mt. 28: 19-20; Acts 17:30-31); and

Whereas, the private worship of any person cannot and should not be policed, but false public worship should be disapproved, detested and opposed. (Ex. 20: 1-6; Mt. 28: 19-20; 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Sam. 16:7; Ex 26:2; Ps. 2, Ps. 44:21; Rev. 2:23; Luke 16:15; Eph 1:20-21, Deut. 19:15; Mt 18:16; 1 Tim. 5:19, 2 Cor. 10:5); and

Whereas, *WCF* 23.3 says, "It is the duty of the civil magistrates to protect the person and the good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretense of religion or of infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever"; and

Whereas, *WCF* 23.3 also calls the Civil Magistrate "to take order, that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation of disturbance," when taken in context with the rest of the paragraph, should be understood to pertain only to the Christian Faith and should not be understood as a mandate for the Civil Magistrate to protect the public worship of false religions; and

Whereas, *WCF* 23.3 allows private worship in one's own home which does not fall under the purview of the Civil Magistrate, and thus such private worship is permitted without threat of "indignity, violence, abuse, etc."; and

Whereas the Lord's Prayer instructs us to ask, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done as it is in heaven"; and,

Whereas the *Westminster Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms* both teach us that when we pray this prayer we ask "that the kingdom of sin and Satan be destroyed" (*WLC* 191 cf. *WSC* 102); and,

Whereas, the *Westminster Larger Catechism* #108 says that in order to keep the second commandment, "each one according to their place" (including the civil magistrate) has the obligation of "the disapproving, detesting, opposing all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry," (Acts 17:16-17; Ps. 16:4; Deut. 7:5; Isa. 30:32); and

Whereas, every officer in the Presbyterian Church in America has taken a vow to uphold the doctrines and duties in the *Westminster Standards*,

Therefore, Westminster Presbytery petitions the Presbyterian Church in America at its 54th General Assembly to corporately and publicly recognize in adopting this overture the duty of the civil magistrate (especially State Governors, and local officials) of their God-ordained responsibility of "the disapproving, detesting, opposing all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry" (*WLC* 108) within the boundaries of their own jurisdictions.

Adopted by the Westminster Presbytery at its stated meeting, November 14, 2026
Attested by /s/ TE Thomas E. Rickard, Stated Clerk