No. 9317

(Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution)

DISCIPLES SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT HIGHER EDUCATION

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is in covenant with and supports fifteen colleges and universities within the United States, and

WHEREAS, Disciples of Christ have generally held that an educated citizenship informed by Judeo-Christian principles contributes to the common good of the nation, and

WHEREAS, our civil liberties are strengthened if all higher learning is not entrusted to the care of government-sponsored education, and

WHEREAS, the nation's independent colleges and universities enroll 21 percent of all students, but award 33 percent of all bachelor's degrees, 42 percent of master's degrees, 36 percent of all doctoral degrees, and 59 percent of all first professional degrees, and

WHEREAS, the median family income of students in state and independent four-year institutions is identical — $36,000 — so that private higher education is not the preserve of an economic elite class, and

WHEREAS, the record of minority enrollment and implementation of public service projects is comparatively exemplary in the independent sector of higher education, and

WHEREAS, without the independent higher education sector, the state system of higher education would have to assume the education of an additional 2.8 million students at an annual cost to taxpayers in excess of $12 billion,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that:

(1) the General Minister and President communicate to the President of the United States of America and to the Secretary of Education the support of the General Assembly for national public policy initiatives that strengthen and protect the well being of the nation's independent colleges and universities including those in covenant with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and

(2) the Division of Higher Education, working through the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, encourage all regions and congregations who have colleges and universities related to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) within their respective states to support through resolutions and other means legislative initiatives consistent with the separation of church and state that enhance students' access to church-related institutions.