**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**H. 4509**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

House Resolution

Sponsors: Rep. Gilliard

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Introduced in the House on May 6, 2025

Currently residing in the House Committee on **Invitations and Memorial Resolutions**

Summary: Memorializing the President and Congress to apologize to the Vatican and the Catholic Church

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

5/6/2025 House Introduced ([House Journal‑page 226](h:\hj\20250506.docx))

5/6/2025 House Referred to Committee on **Invitations and Memorial Resolutions** ([House Journal‑page 226](h:\hj\20250506.docx))

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=4509&session=126&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[05/06/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/4509_20250506.docx)

A house RESOLUTION

TO MEMORIALIZE THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO EXPRESS A SINCERE APOLOGY TO THE VATICAN AND MEMBERS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FOR THE DEPICTION AND DISSEMINATION OF IMAGES OF THE PRESIDENT APPEARING DRESSED AS THE POPE.

Whereas, on April 21, 2025, Pope Francis, head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of the Vatican City State since 2013, died at the age of 88; and

Whereas, during the Catholic Church’s nine-day period of mourning the death of Pope Francis, an image depicting the President of the United States dressed in white papal vestments appeared on social media accounts of the President and the White House, and were subsequently disseminated widely on social media and other mass media; and

Whereas, the image, purportedly generated using artificial intelligence technology, has drawn substantial public attention and criticism regarding its propriety, particularly given that it was made public during the mourning period for Pope Francis; and

Whereas, in subsequent public comments on the matter, the president dismissed criticism of the image, asserting that the image was created in jest; and

Whereas, in a nation that respects the Chrisitan faith, the production and dissemination of this image is sacrilegious, inappropriate, distasteful, and an affront to the Catholic Church and all persons of faith; and

Whereas, the actions of the president were not just an insult to the Catholic Church, but also to a foreign head of state, since the Pope serves as head of the Vatican City, a sovereign state; and

Whereas, accordingly, the South Carolina House of Representatives urges the president to express sincere contrition for his actions and apologize to the Vatican and the members of the Catholic Church. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, memorialize the President of the United States and the United States Congress to express a sincere apology to the Vatican and members of the Catholic Church for the depiction and dissemination of images of the president appearing dressed as the pope.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the President of the United States and the members of the South Carolina Congressional Delegation.

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