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ORRIN G. HATCH

FOUNDATION

Press Release

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Hatch to Receive Religious Liberty's Highest Honor

Orrin G. Hatch, champion of conscience, religion, and belief in public life, is named 2020 Canterbury Medalist

Washington DC—Orrin G. Hatch, Chairman Emeritus of the Orrin G. Hatch Foundation, has been named Becket's [2020 Canterbury Medalist](#) for his instrumental role in the passing of fundamental legislation in defense of religious liberty for people of all faiths. The Canterbury Medal, religious liberty's highest honor, recognizes an individual who has demonstrated courage and commitment to defending religious freedom in America and around the world. Senator Hatch's legacy is marked by civil discourse, principled leadership, and unfailing dedication to the defense of religious liberty for all. Becket will honor Orrin G. Hatch with the 2020 Canterbury Medal at its annual gala in New York on Thursday, May 21.

"Over more than four decades of Senate service, I worked to build coalitions of common interest to preserve religious liberty for people of all faiths. Protecting these rights is essential to the future of our republic," said Hatch. "Receiving the Canterbury Medal is an incredible honor, and I am committed to always live worthy of it by remaining steadfast in my devotion to religious liberty."

In his 42 years of service, Senator Hatch became the longest-serving Republican and Utahn in U.S. Senate history and earned the reputation as one of the most effective and bipartisan lawmakers of all time. In addition to sponsoring or cosponsoring over 750 bills that have become law, one of his most prized legislative successes is the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) in 1993, which was passed by overwhelming majorities

which was passed unanimously in both houses of Congress. Outside of public service, Hatch is a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A trained pianist and poetry aficionado, Senator Hatch has composed hundreds of songs for many different artists, and even boasts a holiday album. Senator Hatch continues to advance issues relating to freedom of conscience, religion, and belief through his foundation, the Orrin G. Hatch Foundation.

"Few lawmakers have done more for the cause of religious liberty than the 'Father of RFRA,' Senator Orrin G. Hatch," said Mark Rienzi, president of Becket. "Senator Hatch's legacy of championing protections for people of all faiths—and working across partisan lines to do so—has greatly strengthened religious liberty in the United States. His vital efforts will not soon be forgotten by advocates for religious liberty and those who can now freely practice their faith."

[Past medalists](#) include the late Nobel Peace Laureate and Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel; Cuban poet and former political prisoner, Armando Valladares; Orthodox rabbi of the oldest Jewish congregation in the U.S., Rabbi Dr. Meir Soloveichik; First Counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President Dallin H. Oaks; and 62nd Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, Chaplain Barry C. Black.

*"Senator Orrin G. Hatch is uniquely qualified for this honor. His unusually long and distinguished service in the United States Senate includes many things to honor, but none more significant to our interest than his invariable stalwart defense of religious liberty," said **President Oaks, who received the award in 2013.** "By inspiring advocacy and influential action, Senator Hatch's vision and influence has always furthered what we honor by the Canterbury Medal."*

The Canterbury Medal draws its name from one of history's most dramatic religious liberty stand-offs, which occurred between Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas à Becket, the law firm's namesake, and King Henry II of England. The annual Canterbury Gala honors the award recipient in a black-tie event at the Pierre Hotel in New York and is attended by the world's most distinguished religious leaders and religious liberty advocates.

Additional Information:

- [About Senator Hatch](#) (biography of 2020 Canterbury Medalist)
- [The 2020 Canterbury Medal Gala Tickets and Sponsorships](#)
- [Past Canterbury Medal recipients](#)

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