
HOUSE BILL 1230

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Backlund, Johnson, Lambert, Carrell, Sherstad,
D. Schmidt, Thompson, Boldt and Pennington

Read first time 01/17/97. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to students' rights; adding a new section to
2 chapter 28A.600 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the right of free
5 speech and freedom of religion as guaranteed through the First
6 Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, sections 5
7 and 11 of the Washington state Constitution and that these rights
8 extend fully to students enrolled in the common schools of our state.

9 The legislature also recognizes that students may choose to
10 exercise these rights, as protected under the law, in response to the
11 challenges of academic pursuit. While the legislature upholds the
12 rights of students to freely express their religious beliefs and right
13 of free speech, it also holds firmly that it is not the role of
14 education to solicit student responses that force students to reveal,
15 analyze, or critique their religious beliefs.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.600
17 RCW to read as follows:

1 The First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Article
2 I, sections 5 and 11 of the Washington state Constitution guarantee
3 that students retain their rights of free speech and free exercise of
4 religion, notwithstanding the student's enrollment and attendance in a
5 common school. These rights include, but are not limited to, the right
6 of an individual student to freely express and incorporate the
7 student's religious beliefs and opinions where relevant or appropriate
8 in any and all class work, homework, evaluations or tests,
9 extracurricular activities, or other activities under the sponsorship
10 or auspices of the school district, without retribution, negative
11 consequence, or penalty to the standing, evaluation, or privilege of
12 the individual student.

13 This section is not intended to impose any limit on the exchange of
14 ideas in the common schools of this state. However, no officer,
15 employee, agent, or contractor of a school district may solicit,
16 suggest, or prompt students, either directly or indirectly, to express
17 their religious beliefs or opinions, recognized and protected by this
18 statute, in class work, homework, evaluations or tests, extracurricular
19 activities, or other activities under the auspices of the school
20 district.

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