
SENATE COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

2025 Regular Session

Amendments proposed by Senate Committee on Education to Reengrossed House Bill No. 371 by Representative Amedee

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, line 4, delete "R.S. 17:236.1(H)" and insert "R.S. 17:176.3, 236.1.1, 236.4,"

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 1, delete lines 7 and 8, and insert the following:

"places of worship; to provide for corresponding provisions between the Preservation of Religious Freedom Act and Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950 with respect to religious education; to provide with respect to home study cooperatives; to provide for release time; to provide for partnerships between parents of virtual learners and religious facilities; to provide for definitions; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters."

AMENDMENT NO. 3On page 2, at the end of line 25, insert "or home study cooperative, pursuant to R.S. 17:236.1,"AMENDMENT NO. 4

On page 2, delete lines 28 and 29, and insert the following:

"(b) Completing courses typically studied in preparation for college admission."

AMENDMENT NO. 5

On page 3, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

"(6) Restrict or deny the use of the building by a parent whose child attends a public virtual school, pursuant to R.S. 17:236.4."

AMENDMENT NO. 6On page 3, at the beginning of line 27, insert "A."AMENDMENT NO. 7On page 4, line 1, change "a judicial" to "a judicial, or" and after "administrative" insert a " ,"(comma)AMENDMENT NO. 8

On page 4, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

"B. If after satisfying the notice provisions provided in R.S. 13:5238, a person obtains preliminary injunctive relief under this Part, the person shall remain entitled to the remedies provided in Paragraph (A)(2) of this Section, notwithstanding any voluntary cessation or efforts to remove the infringing burden on the moving party's religious beliefs."

1 AMENDMENT NO. 9

2 On page 5, line 4, delete "R.S. 17:236.1(H)" and insert "R.S. 17:176.3, 236.1.1, 236.4,"

3 AMENDMENT NO. 10

4 On page 5, delete lines 6 and 7, and insert the following:

5 "§176.3. Release time; religious instruction; policies; parental consent

6 A. Each city, parish, or other local public school board may adopt a policy
7 to make available opportunities for after-school religious instruction programs and
8 may adopt a policy to provide for release time for students enrolled in the schools
9 under its jurisdiction.

10 B. Parental consent must be obtained, in writing, for the student to participate
11 in release time.

12 * * *

13 §236.1.1. Home Study Cooperatives Protection Act; home study students;
14 protections for religious freedom and parental choice in education

15 A. The purpose of this Section shall be all of the following:

16 (1) To ensure that parents in this state who choose to voluntarily associate
17 to advance the primary education of their children for any reason, including as an
18 exercise of religious freedom or completing courses typically studied in preparation
19 for college admission, shall not be subject to any additional restrictions or
20 regulations other than the minimum requirements provided for in R.S. 17:221.

21 (2) To ensure that a church that allows a home study cooperative to use its
22 facilities retains all religious free exercise rights, including those enumerated under
23 the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America as well as
24 Article I, Section 8 and Article XII, Section 17 of the Constitution of Louisiana and
25 the remedies provided in the Preservation of Religious Freedom Act, pursuant to
26 R.S. 13:5231, et seq., whether or not the operation of a home study cooperative is
27 directed by parents who are members of the church or nonmembers who live in the
28 community."

29 AMENDMENT NO. 11

30 On page 5, line 8, delete "H.(1)" and insert "B."

31 AMENDMENT NO. 12

32 On page 5, delete lines 12 and 13, and insert:

33 "(b) Completing courses typically studied in preparation for college admission."

34 AMENDMENT NO. 13

35 On page 5, delete lines 16 through 20, and insert the following:

36 "C. As used in this Section, the following words shall have the following
37 meanings:

38 (1) "Approved home study program" means an educational program of
39 instruction that complies with R.S. 17:236.1.

40 (2) "Home study cooperative" means a voluntary association of parents who
41 are homeschooling families who come together to share educational resources, group
42 instruction, and social opportunities for their children who are in kindergarten
43 through the twelfth grade and meet at various times and at various locations to
44 participate in or enhance the education offered for their child's primary educational
45 program, which may or may not align with the required or recommended
46 kindergarten through the twelfth grade instructional state standards. Neither the
47 frequency or location of meetings, shall alter the definition of "home study
48 cooperative", whether the student is enrolled in a home study program approved by
49 the state board or a nonpublic school not seeking state approval.

1 (3) "A nonpublic school not seeking state approval" means a home-based
 2 private education program operated by parents that provides the parents autonomy
 3 to educate their children without approval.

4 (4) "Operation of a home study cooperative" means the parents of the
 5 children participating in the home study cooperative and any other individuals
 6 assisting those parents while engaged in any actions taken to organize, facilitate, or
 7 operate the home study cooperative at any church, other place of worship, facility,
 8 home, or other structure utilized by the home study cooperative.

9 (5) "Parent" means the parent or guardian of any child under the age of
 10 eighteen.

11 (6) "Primary education" means a program of instruction for a student to
 12 comply with R.S. 17:221 from kindergarten through grade twelve, including but not
 13 limited to an approved home study program or a nonpublic school not seeking state
 14 approval.

15 (7) "State board" means the state Board of Elementary and Secondary
 16 Education.

17 D. Each home study cooperative shall remain subject to laws or other legal
 18 provisions relating to the protection of the physical health and safety of its students,
 19 and the prevention of unlawful conduct, including unlawful conduct in or near a
 20 public school. Otherwise, each home study cooperative shall be exempt from
 21 statutes, rules, regulations, guidelines, or other regulatory provisions imposed by the
 22 state, local governments, or local school systems, including, but not limited to, the
 23 following:

24 (1) No state, local, or other school system employee or other government
 25 employee shall initiate or conduct any site inspection, site visit, or other investigation
 26 that would not have been initiated or made but for the operation or presence of a
 27 home study cooperative.

28 (2) No public school governing authority shall take any action or in any
 29 manner discriminate against or otherwise distinguish any student or parent based on
 30 their participation in a home study cooperative.

31 (3) No public school governing authority shall require that any home study
 32 cooperative be in any manner required to register or otherwise report its existence
 33 or anything related to the operation of a home study cooperative.

34 (4) Home study cooperatives may, at their discretion, partner with local
 35 education agencies to voluntarily access extracurricular programming and
 36 interscholastic athletics, pursuant to R.S. 17:176.2, facilities, or dual enrollment opportunities.

37 E. If requested, the Louisiana Department of Education shall provide
 38 information and guidance to home study students or home study cooperatives for all
 39 of the following:

40 (1) Recommendations for curriculum and instructional materials that align
 41 with the Louisiana Student Standards in English language arts, mathematics, science,
 42 and social studies.

43 (2) Where to locate statewide assessments, including the ACT and
 44 WorkKeys.

45 (3) Eligibility guidance for participation in the Taylor Opportunity Program
 46 for Students (TOPS) and the Jump Start career pathway programs.

47 F. This Section shall be known as the Home Study Cooperatives Protection
 48 Act."

49 AMENDMENT NO. 14

50 On page 5, after line 21, insert the following:

51 "§236.4. Partnerships with parents; public virtual schools; religious education; use
 52 of facilities; protection for church or other religious organizations; parental
 53 choice in education

54 A. The purpose of this Section shall be all of the following:

55 (1) To allow parents to enter into a voluntary partnership with a partnering
 56 church to provide religious education or socialization for their child who is a virtual
 57 learner at a public virtual school.

58 (2) To ensure that a parent in this state whose child is participating in a public
 59 virtual school, pursuant to R.S. 17:236.3, and who voluntarily chooses to partner

1 with a church facility to provide religious education or socialization for their child,
 2 shall not be penalized because the child is taking the required online courses at a
 3 church and the parent shall not be subject to any additional restrictions or regulations
 4 other than those required by the public virtual school.

5 (3) To ensure that a church or other religious organization that partners with
 6 a parent or group of parents to provide children who are participating in a public
 7 virtual school with a facility for religious education or socialization retains all
 8 religious free exercise rights, including those enumerated under the First Amendment
 9 of the Constitution of the United States of America as well as Article I, Section 8
 10 and Article XII, Section 17 of the Constitution of Louisiana and the remedies
 11 provided in the Preservation of Religious Freedom Act, pursuant to R.S. 13:5231, et
 12 seq., whether or not the operation of the public virtual school is directed by parents
 13 who are members of the church or nonmembers who live in the community.

14 B. As used in this Section, the following words, whether singular or plural,
 15 shall have the following meanings:

16 (1) "Parent" means the parent or guardian of any child under the age of
 17 eighteen.

18 (2) "Partnering church" means a church or other religious organization that
 19 partners with one or more parents to provide a facility for religious education or
 20 socialization.

21 (3) "Parent-church-public virtual school partnership" means a voluntary
 22 association of one or more parents whose children are virtual learners and who
 23 partner with a partnering church facility to provide religious education or
 24 socialization for their child. Neither the frequency or location of with a partner
 25 church shall alter the definition of "parent-church-public virtual school."

26 (4) "Public virtual school" has the same meaning as R.S. 17:236.3.

27 (5) "Virtual learners" are students who are participating in a program of
 28 education via a public virtual school.

29 C. Two or more parents whose children are participating in a public virtual
 30 school program, as provided in R.S. 17:236.3, may meet in a parent's home, church
 31 or other place of worship, or a nonprofit community center. Nothing herein shall
 32 prohibit the parents from combining the public virtual school curriculum with Bible
 33 classes or other religious courses of study.

34 D. The public virtual student shall be included in the membership count for
 35 the city, parish, or other local public school system that operates the public virtual
 36 school in which the student is enrolled for all purposes, including state funding
 37 through the Minimum Foundation Program formula.

38 E. No state agency, city, parish, or local public school board shall adopt a
 39 policy prohibiting the parent of a child enrolled in a public virtual school from
 40 partnering with a church or other person selected by the parent for any of the
 41 following purposes:

42 (1) Providing religious education or Bible study.

43 (2) Facilitating socialization for student enrichment.

44 (3) Supervising the student for the parent while the student is receiving
 45 virtual instruction or engaging in virtual learning.

46 F. Each partnering church shall remain subject to laws or other legal
 47 provisions required for a church relating to the protection of the physical health and
 48 safety of children and the prevention of unlawful conduct. Otherwise, each
 49 partnering church shall be exempt from statutes, rules, regulations, guidelines, or
 50 other regulatory provisions imposed by the state, local governments, or local school
 51 systems, including, but not limited to, the following:

52 (1) No city, parish, or other local public school board employee or other
 53 government employee shall initiate or conduct any site inspection, site visit, or other
 54 investigation that would not have been initiated or made but for the operation or
 55 presence of virtual learners, pursuant to a parent-church-public virtual school
 56 partnership.

57 (2) No city, parish, or other local public school board shall take any action
 58 or in any manner discriminate against or otherwise distinguish any student who is a
 59 virtual learner or a parent based on participation in a parent-church-public virtual
 60 school partnership.

61 (3) No city, parish, or other local public school board or the state board shall
 62 require that any home study cooperative be in any manner required to register or

1 otherwise report its existence or anything related to the operation of a parent-church-
2 public virtual school partnership."