

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8

BY REPRESENTATIVES HORTON, AMEDEE, BACALA, EMERSON, GAROFALO,  
AND MCFARLAND

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

SCHOOLS: Requires display of the national motto, "In God We Trust", in every public elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education classroom

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:262(A)(2) and (B) and to enact R.S. 17:262(C), 3351(O), and  
3 3996(B)(75), relative to public elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools;  
4 to require display of the national motto in each classroom; to provide relative to the  
5 use of public funds for this purpose; to provide for applicability to charter schools;  
6 and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:262(A)(2) and (B) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.  
9 17:262(C), 3351(O), and 3996(B)(75) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §262. Flag and patriotic customs of the United States; required instruction

11 A.

12 \* \* \*

13 (2) ~~Not later than the 2019-2020 school year, the~~The program of instruction  
14 on patriotic customs required by this Section shall include instruction on the national  
15 motto, "In God We Trust", and each public school governing authority shall display  
16 the national motto in each ~~building it uses and~~ classroom in each school under its  
17 jurisdiction. ~~The nature of the display shall be determined by each governing~~  
18 ~~authority with a minimum requirement of a paper sign.~~ At a minimum, the national  
19 motto shall be displayed on a poster or framed document that is at least eleven inches

1 by fourteen inches. The motto shall be the central focus of the poster or framed  
2 document and shall be printed in a large, easily readable font.

3 B. This Section does not require a public school governing authority to spend  
4 its funds to purchase national motto displays. A governing authority may spend its  
5 funds or donated funds to purchase the displays and may accept donated displays.

6 C. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall adopt rules  
7 and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to ~~insure~~  
8 ensure the proper implementation of this Section.

9 \* \* \*

10 §3351. General powers, duties, and functions of postsecondary education  
11 management boards

12 \* \* \*

13 O.(1) Each board shall require each institution under its jurisdiction to  
14 display the national motto, "In God We Trust", in each classroom on the institution's  
15 campus. At a minimum, the national motto shall be displayed on a poster or framed  
16 document that is at least eleven inches by fourteen inches. The motto shall be the  
17 central focus of the poster or framed document and shall be printed in a large, easily  
18 readable font.

19 (2) This Subsection does not require a public postsecondary education  
20 management board or a public postsecondary education institution to spend its funds  
21 to purchase such displays. An institution or management board may spend its funds  
22 or donated funds to purchase such displays and may accept donated displays.

23 \* \* \*

24 §3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements

25 \* \* \*

26 B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and  
27 except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a  
28 charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this  
29 Chapter and its approved charter and the school's officers and employees shall be

1 exempt from all statutory mandates or other statutory requirements that are  
2 applicable to public schools and to public school officers and employees except for  
3 the following laws otherwise applicable to public schools with the same grades:

4 \* \* \*

5 (75) Flag and patriotic customs of the United States, R.S. 17:262.

6 \* \* \*

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 8 Reengrossed

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Horton

**Abstract:** Requires the display of the national motto in each classroom in each public school and in each public postsecondary education institution.

Present law requires each public school governing authority to display the national motto, "In God We Trust", in each building it uses and in each school under its jurisdiction.

Proposed law changes this requirement from in each building and each school to in each classroom in each school.

Present law specifies that the nature of the display shall be determined by each governing authority with a minimum requirement of a paper sign. Proposed law deletes present law and instead requires that the motto:

- (1) Be displayed on a poster or framed document that is at least 11 inches by 14 inches.
- (2) Be the central focus of the poster or framed document.
- (3) Be printed in a large, easily readable font.

Proposed law additionally requires such display of the national motto in every classroom in charter schools and on public postsecondary education institution campuses.

Proposed law provides that proposed law does not require spending public funds to purchase displays.

Proposed law authorizes governing authorities, management boards, and institutions to accept donated displays and to spend their funds or donated funds to purchase displays.

(Amends R.S. 17:262(A)(2) and (B); Adds R.S. 17:262(C), 3351(O)), and 3996(B)(75))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

- 1. Specify physical requirements of the display of the national motto in classrooms.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Make proposed law applicable to charter schools.