

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 876

BY REPRESENTATIVES SEABAUGH AND HENRY BURNS

SCHOOLS/BOARDS: Provides relative to greetings and displays associated with traditional celebrations in winter in public schools

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:2118, relative to the recognition of traditional winter celebrations in public
3 schools; to authorize school boards to allow certain greetings and displays; to
4 provide limitations; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 17:2118 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

7 §2118. Celebrations in winter

8 A. A school board may educate students about the history of traditional
9 celebrations in winter and allow students and district staff to offer traditional
10 greetings regarding the celebrations, including but not limited to:

11 (1) Merry Christmas.

12 (2) Happy Hanukkah.

13 (3) Happy holidays.

14 (4) Happy Kwanzaa.

15 B. Except as provided by Subsection C of this Section, a school board may
16 display on school property scenes or symbols associated with traditional celebrations
17 in winter, including a menorah or a Christmas image such as a nativity scene or
18 Christmas tree, if the display includes a scene or symbol of at least one of the
19 following:

- 1 (1) More than one religion.
- 2 (2) One religion and at least one secular scene or symbol.
- 3 C. A display relating to a traditional celebration may not include a message
- 4 that encourages adherence to a particular religious belief.
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DIGEST

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Seabaugh

HB No. 876

Abstract: Provides relative to recognition and celebration of traditional celebrations in winter in public schools.

Proposed law authorizes a school board to educate students about the history of traditional celebrations in winter and to allow students and district staff to offer traditional greetings regarding the celebrations, including Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy holidays, and Happy Kwanzaa.

Authorizes a school board to display on school property scenes or symbols associated with traditional celebrations in winter, including a menorah or a Christmas image such as a nativity scene or Christmas tree, if the display includes a scene or symbol of more than one religion or one religion and at least one secular scene or symbol.

Prohibits a display relating to a traditional celebration from including a message that encourages adherence to a particular religious belief.

(Adds R.S. 17:2118)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill.

1. Adds "Happy Kwanzaa" to the list of greetings proposed law authorizes students and staff to offer regarding winter celebrations.