

2020 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 145

BY REPRESENTATIVE HODGES

SCHOOLS: Requires rather than authorizes that students be given the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag in public schools

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:2115 and 2117(A)(7) and to enact R.S. 17:2117.1, relative to
3 the recitation of the pledge of allegiance in public schools; to require rather than
4 authorize schools to allow the opportunity for student recitation of the pledge; and
5 to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:2115 and 2117(A)(7) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
8 17:2117.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §2115. Silent prayer or meditation; ~~pledge of allegiance~~

10 ~~A.~~ Each parish, city, and other local public school board in the state shall
11 permit the proper school authorities of each school within its jurisdiction to allow an
12 opportunity, at the start of each school day, for those students and teachers desiring
13 to do so to observe a brief time in silent prayer or meditation. The allowance of a
14 brief time for silent prayer or meditation shall not be intended nor interpreted as state
15 support of or interference with religion, nor shall such time allowance be promoted
16 as a religious exercise, and the implementation of this Section shall remain neutral
17 toward religion.

18 ~~B.~~ Each parish and city school board in the state shall also permit the proper
19 authorities of each school to allow the opportunity for group recitation of the "Pledge

1 of Allegiance to the Flag". ~~Such recitation shall occur at the commencement of the~~
2 ~~first class of each day in all grades and in all public schools.~~

3 * * *

4 §2117. Reading and posting of certain writings, documents, and records;
5 prohibition; limitations; dissemination to local school systems

6 A. No public elementary or secondary school governing authority,
7 superintendent of schools, or school system administrator, nor any public elementary
8 or secondary school principal or administrator shall prohibit any teacher in a public
9 school system of this state from reading and posting in a public school building or
10 classroom or at a school-sponsored event any excerpts or portions of the following:

11 * * *

12 (7) ~~The pledge of allegiance~~ Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

13 * * *

14 §2117.1. Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag

15 A. Each public school governing authority shall require that each student, at
16 the beginning of each school day, be given the opportunity to voluntarily recite the
17 Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag with other students as a group.

18 B. No student shall be compelled or required to participate in the group
19 recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag; however, all students
20 shall be encouraged to exhibit respectful behavior toward others during the pledge
21 regardless of whether or not an individual student chooses to participate in the
22 recitation of the pledge.

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)]

HB 145 Original

2020 Regular Session

Hodges

Abstract: Requires rather than authorizes all public schools to provide students with the opportunity to recite the pledge of allegiance as a group.

Present law, relative to the recitation of the pledge of allegiance in public schools, allows individual schools to decide whether to permit group recitation. If group recitation is

authorized, present law requires that it occur at the commencement of the first class of each day.

Proposed law requires, rather than authorizes, that students be given an opportunity for group recitation of the pledge. Requires that the opportunity be provided at the beginning of each school day and requires that students be encouraged to exhibit respectful behavior toward others during the recitation.

Proposed law changes reference to the pledge from the pledge of allegiance to the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

(Amends R.S. 17:2115 and 2117(A)(7); Adds R.S. 17:2117.1)