

By: Roberson, Fillingane, Formby, Holland,
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To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 721

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO ALLOW THE TEACHING OF
2 VIRTUES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS; TO REQUIRE STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION
3 IN VIRTUES TRAINING TO BE VOLUNTARY; TO PROHIBIT THE ASSESSMENT OF
4 A STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN VIRTUES TRAINING FROM BEING BASED ON
5 EVIDENCE OF CERTAIN VIRTUES IN THE STUDENT'S LIFE; TO AUTHORIZE
6 THE POSTING OF DOCUMENTS ON VIRTUES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS; AND FOR
7 RELATED PURPOSES.

8 WHEREAS, today's young people will be the stewards of our
9 communities, nation and world in critical times, and the present
10 and future well-being of our society requires an educated, caring,
11 virtuous citizenry; and

12 WHEREAS, many of our young people are not receiving
13 instruction in virtues and no longer have any moral anchor by
14 which to be guided; thus, crime and violence among adolescents are
15 continually mounting; and

16 WHEREAS, America has moved so far from her Bible-based
17 founding principles that she will no longer allow Scripture in her
18 public schools, yet absolute, constant, fundamental standards of
19 right and wrong must be taught to young people through a neutral
20 source if our country is to regain her moral compass: NOW,
21 THEREFORE,

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

23 SECTION 1. (1) Each public school district, in its
24 discretion, may authorize the teaching of virtues in the schools
25 within the district. However, nothing in this section shall be
26 construed to require school districts to teach virtues. Students'
27 participation in a class or program offering training in virtues
28 must be voluntary, and nothing in this section shall be construed

29 to require any student to unwillingly participate in a class or
30 program in which training in virtues is offered.

31 (2) Any school district that elects to offer a program of
32 training in virtues in the schools within that district may
33 determine which virtues will be incorporated into the district's
34 program of virtues training.

35 (3) Assessment of the students' understanding of specific
36 virtues taught in any class or program offering training in
37 virtues must be limited to and reflect the material taught in the
38 class or program. In determining a student's grade, a teacher may
39 not evaluate in any way whether or not the student has evidenced a
40 specific virtue in the student's own life.

41 (4) Any teacher, administrator, school counselor or local
42 school board member in any public school district in the state may
43 post in a public school classroom, building or other facility of
44 the school any document or writing on a specific virtue or virtues
45 or on virtuous conduct in general.

46 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
47 and after July 1, 2000.