

By: Representatives Fillingane, Robinson
(84th), Chism, Nicholson

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 51
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE A BRIEF PERIOD OF QUIET REFLECTION IN
2 PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOMS; TO AMEND SECTION 37-13-163, MISSISSIPPI
3 CODE OF 1972, TO AUTHORIZE AND DIRECT PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS IN
4 PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO DISPLAY THE MOTTO OF
5 THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN EACH CLASSROOM, SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
6 AND CAFETERIA; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 SECTION 1. (1) In each public school classroom, the local
9 school governing board may authorize a brief period of quiet
10 reflection for not more than sixty (60) seconds at the opening of
11 school upon every school day.

12 (2) The moment of quiet reflection authorized by subsection
13 (1) of this section is not intended to be and shall not be
14 conducted as a religious service or exercise but is considered an
15 opportunity for a moment of silent reflection.

16 SECTION 2. Section 37-13-163, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
17 amended as follows:

18 37-13-163. (1) Any teacher, administrator, school council
19 or local school board in any public school district in this state
20 may post in a public school building, classroom or at any school
21 event or read from any historical document or writing relating to
22 the founding of the United States of America or this state, or
23 both, notwithstanding the fact that such materials may include
24 religious quotations, references or illustrations. There shall be
25 no content-based censorship of American or Mississippi History,
26 heritage or culture based on any religious references contained in
27 such documents, writings or records.

28 (2) Principals and teachers in each public elementary and
29 secondary school of each school district in this state shall
30 display on an appropriately framed background with minimum
31 dimensions of eleven (11) inches by fourteen (14) inches, the
32 following motto of the United States of America in each classroom,
33 school auditorium and school cafeteria under his or her
34 supervision: "IN GOD WE TRUST." For purposes of this provision,
35 "classroom" shall mean any room of a public school where
36 instruction takes place.

37 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from
38 and after July 1, 2001.