

By: Representative Calhoun

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 427

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-13-8, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REQUIRE A BRIEF PERIOD OF QUIET REFLECTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOL
3 CLASSROOMS AT THE START OF EACH SCHOOL DAY; TO AMEND SECTION
4 37-13-163, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE THE TEN
5 COMMANDMENTS TO BE DISPLAYED IN EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOM; TO
6 REQUIRE TEACHERS TO HAVE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS RECITED ALOUD AT THE
7 BEGINNING OF EACH SCHOOL DAY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-13-8, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
10 amended as follows:

11 37-13-8. (1) In each public school classroom, the local
12 school governing board * * * shall require a brief period of quiet
13 reflection for not more than sixty (60) seconds at the opening of
14 school upon every school day.

15 (2) The moment of quiet reflection * * * required by
16 subsection (1) of this section is not intended to be and shall not
17 be conducted as a religious service or exercise but is considered
18 an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection.

19 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-13-163, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
20 amended as follows:



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24 event or read from any historical document or writing relating to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

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

40 **SECTION 3.** The school board of each school district shall
41 require the teachers in that school district to have the Ten
42 Commandments recited aloud at the beginning of the first hour of
43 class each day that school is in session. Any student or teacher
44 who objects to reciting the Ten Commandments must be excused from
45 participating without penalty.



46 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
47 and after July 1, 2019.

