

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 54

Recognizing the authority of public schools to allow students to exercise their constitutional rights by establishing a period of time for silent prayer or meditation or reflection, encouraging the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and refusing to discriminate against individuals or groups on account of their religious character or speech.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 21, 2001

Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. ENGLISH, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. HILLEARY, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. BUYER) introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

JOINT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the authority of public schools to allow students to exercise their constitutional rights by establishing a period of time for silent prayer or meditation or reflection, encouraging the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and refusing to discriminate against individuals or groups on account of their religious character or speech.

Whereas in each public school classroom, the teacher in charge may set aside a period of time, which students

may use for silent prayer or meditation or reflection, a period that is not intended to be and shall not be set aside as a religious service or exercise, but shall be considered as an opportunity for silent prayer or meditation or reflection;

Whereas public schools have the responsibility to foster love of country by allowing students the opportunity to exercise their right to recite the Pledge of Allegiance each day; and

Whereas public schools, in evaluating requests for use of public school facilities during noninstructional time and requests for other privileges, may not discriminate against individuals or groups on account of their religious character or speech: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Resolution may be cited as the “Students’
5 Rights Resolution of 2001”.

6 **SEC. 2. STUDENTS’ RIGHTS RESOLUTION.**

7 (a) **RECOGNITION OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS.**—
8 Congress recognizes the right, as established by the Con-
9 stitution and upheld by the Supreme Court, of all Ameri-
10 cans to freely exercise their religion.

11 (b) **RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS’ RIGHTS.**—Con-
12 gress recognizes the constitutional right of students in
13 public schools to participate in a daily period of time to
14 be used for silent prayer or meditation or reflection and

1 to recite the Pledge of Allegiance; and the right of reli-
2 gious groups to have equal access to school facilities with-
3 out discrimination on account of religious character or
4 speech.

5 (c) PROTECTION OF STUDENTS' RIGHTS.—It is the
6 sense of Congress that public schools should act to protect
7 these constitutional rights by establishing a period of time
8 for silent prayer or meditation or reflection, establishing
9 a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and accommo-
10 dating religious groups by granting equal access rather
11 than discriminating on account of their religious character
12 or speech.

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