

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 219
By: Hope
State Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, there is no provision authorizing the display of the National Motto, "In God We Trust," in public schools. The phrase "In God We Trust" was adopted by the U.S. Congress in 1954 as the National Motto for the United States. This past November, President Bush signed Senate Bill 2690, which reaffirmed "In God We Trust" as our National Motto. Other states have recently enacted legislation that authorizes the National Motto to be displayed in public schools. The purpose of C.S.H.B. 219 is to authorize Texas public schools and colleges to display the National Motto.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the opinion of the committee that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 219 amends Chapter 1 of the Education Code to authorize a public elementary or secondary school or an institution of higher education to display the National Motto, "In God We Trust" in each auditorium, classroom, or cafeteria.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The original bill provided that the National Motto may be displayed "on an appropriately framed background of at least 11 inches by 14 inches." C.S.H.B. 219 removes this language.