

By: Strama

H.B. No. 359

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to the absence of a student from public school to visit
3 with a parent who has been or will be deployed to a combat zone.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. Section 25.087, Education Code, is amended by
6 amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (b-1) and (e) to
7 read as follows:

8 (b) A school district shall excuse a student from attending
9 school for:

10 (1) the following purposes, including travel for those
11 purposes:

12 (A) observing religious holy days; ~~or~~

13 (B) attending a required court appearance; or

14 (C) spending time with the student's parent, if
15 the parent has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or is
16 returning from deployment to a combat zone as a member of the armed
17 forces of the United States, a reserve component of the armed forces
18 of the United States, or the state military forces; or

19 (2) a temporary absence resulting from health care
20 professionals if that student commences classes or returns to
21 school on the same day of the appointment.

22 (b-1) The board of trustees of each independent school
23 district shall establish criteria for determining the number of
24 days a student may receive an excused absence for the purpose

1 described by Subsection (b)(1)(C).

2 (e) In this section, "combat zone" means an area that the
3 president of the United States by executive order designates for
4 purposes of 26 U.S.C. Section 112 as an area in which armed forces
5 of the United States are or have engaged in combat.

6 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
7 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
8 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
9 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
10 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.