

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 773
By: Farney
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, a public school student is required to recite the pledge of allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Texas flag and to observe a minute of silence during which the student may, as the student chooses, reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that will not interfere with or distract another student. However, students in open-enrollment charter schools are not required to recite the pledges of allegiance or to observe a minute of silence. H.B. 773 seeks to include open-enrollment charter school students in these activities.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

H.B. 773 amends the Education Code to require the governing board of each open-enrollment charter school to require students, once during each school day at each campus, to recite the pledge of allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Texas state flag and to provide for the observance of one minute of silence at each campus following the recitation of the pledges of allegiance. The bill requires an open-enrollment charter school to excuse a student from reciting the pledges on written request from the student's parent or guardian. The bill's provisions apply beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.