

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
83R23402 JRJ-D

H.B. 1501
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Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

A moment of silence is observed at the beginning of every school day in Texas classrooms. Students and teachers may use this moment for prayer, meditation, or reflection, as their personal faiths or beliefs dictate. A moment of silence also is observed in memory of tragic events in the school community, state, or country, such as the death of a community member or a national disaster.

September 11, 2001, marked one of the most tragic moments in United States history as the nation experienced four terrorist attacks that resulted in almost 3,000 deaths. There is, however, no official special acknowledgment of the events on September 11 in public schools. H.B. 1501 will encourage the commemoration of the tragedy and reflection on those lives that were lost innocently and in service due to the attacks. The bill will require Texas schools to observe one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period on September 11 of each year. It also directs a class instructor to make a statement of reference to the memory of the individuals who died on that day.

H.B. 1501 amends current law relating to the commemoration of September 11, 2001, at public schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 25, Education Code, by adding Section 25.0821, as follows:

Sec. 25.0821. MINUTE OF SILENCE TO COMMEMORATE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

(a) Requires each public elementary or secondary school, to commemorate the events of September 11, 2001, in each year that date falls on a regular school day, to provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period of that day.

(b) Requires the class instructor, immediately before the period of observance required by this section, to make a statement of reference to the memory of individuals who died on September 11, 2001.

(c) Authorizes the period of observance required by this section to be held in conjunction with the minute of silence required by Section 25.082 (School Day; Pledges of Allegiance; Minute of Silence).

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.