

By: King, et al.

S.B. No. 1515

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the display of the Ten Commandments in public schools.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 1, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 1.0041 to read as follows:

Sec. 1.0041. DISPLAY OF TEN COMMANDMENTS. (a) A public elementary or secondary school shall display in a conspicuous place in each classroom of the school a durable poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments that meets the requirements of Subsection (b).

(b) A poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments described by Subsection (a) must:

(1) include the text of the Ten Commandments as provided by Subsection (c) in a size and typeface that is legible to a person with average vision from anywhere in the classroom in which the poster or framed copy is displayed; and

(2) be at least 16 inches wide and 20 inches tall.

(c) The text of the poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments described by Subsection (a) must read as follows:

"The Ten Commandments

I AM the LORD thy God.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven images.

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

1 Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the  
2 land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

3 Thou shalt not kill.

4 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

5 Thou shalt not steal.

6 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

7 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

8 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor  
9 his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy  
10 neighbor's."

11 (d) A public elementary or secondary school in which each  
12 classroom does not include a poster or framed copy of the Ten  
13 Commandments as required by Subsection (a) must:

14 (1) accept any offer of a privately donated poster or  
15 framed copy of the Ten Commandments provided that the poster or  
16 copy:

17 (A) meets the requirements of Subsection (b); and

18 (B) does not contain any additional content; and

19 (2) display the poster or framed copy as specified in  
20 Subsection (a).

21 (e) If a public elementary or secondary school has a poster  
22 or framed copy of the Ten Commandments in each classroom that does  
23 not meet the requirements of Subsection (b), the school may replace  
24 the posters or copies with posters or copies that meet the  
25 requirements of Subsection (b) using public funds or by accepting a  
26 private donation.

27 (f) A public elementary or secondary school must offer a

1 poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments described by  
2 Subsection (a) in the school's possession that is not needed for  
3 display in a classroom as a donation to another public elementary or  
4 secondary school.

5 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2023-2024  
6 school year.

7 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
8 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
9 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
10 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
11 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.