

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Education
For SB 1515

Compiled on: Tuesday, May 2, 2023 10:37 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: May 2, 2023 8:00 AM

Penny Bradshaw, Ms.

Retired

Spring, TX

PUBLIC SCHOOLS SHOULD NOT INDOCTRINATE CHILDREN!

Public schools should not infringe on parental rights by indoctrinating students in any specific faith tradition, including the 10 Commandments.

“The U.S. Constitution expressly prohibits the entanglement of church and state, and the Texas Constitution guarantees the freedom of worship.”

Displaying the 10 Commandments in every classroom in the state is a violation of the Constitutional separation between church and state. No matter what faith we choose to celebrate or if we have no religious preferences at all, people of all faiths and creeds should resist the State’s endorsement of one particular religion.

HB 1515 is misguided and a waste of our legislator’s time. There are more important issues that need to be addressed in this state than spending time on a bill that is nothing more than indoctrination of our children.

Stop wasting taxpayer dollars on generating this kind of legislation.

Lou Ann Montana

Self/Retired

The Woodlands, TX

Please oppose House Bill 1515.

I am strongly against any requirement to display an accepted symbol of a particular religion in a school. I believe the separation of church and state is one of the most important tenets of our constitution. And freedom of worship is absolutely threatened if an iconic symbol of a particular religion is mandated to be displayed in a public space.

Thank you,

Lou Ann Montana

Sylvia Campbell
self, retired
The Woodlands, TX

Dear Members of the Public Education Committee,
This bill to post the 10 Commandments in all school classrooms is a clear violation of the separation of church and state. It is also an infringement of parental rights, by indoctrinating children in a specific faith tradition. Please vote NO on SB 1515.
Thank you,
Sylvia Campbell

Susan Anderson, Dr.
Texas UU Justice Ministry
Benbrook, TX

Displaying the Ten Commandments in public schools is clearly unconstitutional due to the separation of church and state. Christians, while in the majority, should not impose their religious beliefs on others. The very founding of our country came about, in part, because immigrants left their countries so that they could have religious freedom. Displaying the 10 commandments is a waste of money and will not improve educational achievement. This law, if passed, will surely lead to legal challenges. Please put the state's resources to better uses!

Chris Donofrio

Self / Parent

The Woodlands, TX

I strongly oppose to SB 1515, engrossed.

I demand that you not pass it out of committee.

This bill is based upon an unsupported opinion regarding the Supreme Court decision in Kennedy v Bremerton School District (BSD) released in 2022.

"S.B. 1515 would require Texas public elementary and secondary schools to display the Ten Commandments in each classroom. At present, Texas public schools have no such requirement, and this legislation only became legally feasible with the United States Supreme Court's opinion last year in Kennedy v. Bremerton School District, 142 S. Ct. 2407 (2022), which overturned the Lemon test under the Establishment Clause (found in Lemon v. Kurtzman, 403 U.S. 602 (1971)) and instead provided a test of whether a governmental display of religious content comports with America's history and tradition."

If you read SCOTUS's opinion you'd discover the following facts.

Fact 1

The case only involves the First Amendment's Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses. These "protect an individual engaging in personal religious observance from government reprisal." There was never an Establishment Clause claim by Mr. Kennedy.

Fact 2

The decision focuses only on an individual engaged in private prayer. In this case on public grounds. All sides have agreed that there is "no evidence that students [were] directly coerced to pray with Kennedy." Doing so would be a clear violation of the Establishment Clause.

Fact 3

The school district and lower courts decided the case using the Establishment Clause. The Supreme Court found this clause irrelevant. The Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses take precedence.

Fact 4

This decision is silent regarding the Establishment Clause. The Court also noted this case is different from those decided using violations of the Establishment Clause. It can't be used to support SB 1515. It is silent with respect to this bill.

Fact 5

The Lemon test is a strawman to distract from SB 1515's true intention. Lemon was overturned years ago.

Fact 6

The violation of the Establishment Clause, based on this decision, is still a valid and essential way to prevent government from doing what SB 1515 mandates. A government-mandated attempt to promote Christianity requiring the display of the 10 Commandments in public school classrooms. The same would hold true for any public spaces.

No one doubts that the first four Commandments have only a religious meaning. Meanings different from other religions and traditions.

If enacted, students, teachers, and parents will be reminded of this, regardless of their religion. Based on social and legal work done over many years, these individuals, especially students, will be coerced or shamed into embracing the state's privileged religion. A direct violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause.

SB 1515 is unconstitutional and based on ideas not supported by Kennedy v BSD.

Must we relitigate this?

I strongly oppose SB 1515, engrossed.

Respectfully,

Chris J. Donofrio

Pam Meerbrey, Ms.
Self, substitute teacher
Houston, TX

This is clearly unconstitutional and should not become law. Public schools are in no way religious entities. Religion of any sort does not belong in public schools.

Carol Sheffield
self - retired clinical social worker and corporate consultant
Austin, TX

This is ABSOLUTELY unacceptable! If you want to post the tenets of all the major religions, that's OK if they are all used as examples of good ideals. YOU CANNOT force our public schools to be Christian Schools - that what private institutions are for! This bill is contrary to the Constitution of the United States, and against the stated position of the founding fathers!!!

Morgan Green-Griffin
Self - Volunteer Management
Lewisville, TX

I am strongly against SB 1515. The 10 Commandments have NO PLACE in a public school classroom. SB 1515 violates the separation of church and state and the 1st Amendment. The 1st Amendment grants citizens the freedom of religion AND freedom from religion. Elected officials should not be wasting time on blatantly unconstitutional bills.

Susanna Kelley
None
Austin, TX
Oppose

Jane Chesney
self, retired educator
The Woodlands, TX

This bill has absolutely no merit. Please, let's remember the very good reasons why "separation of church and state" is protected in our state and national constitutions. Vote NO!

Tasha Zander, Dr.
self, Professor
Austin, TX

No. No. No. There is a separation of church and state. There is an ethical obligation to not persecute based on religion. By putting the Ten Commandments in school, you are making an elitist class - you are stating that your religion is better than anyone else's. You are contradicting what we teach our children - to be accepting of all, to appreciate and learn from all. Church has no place in public schools. If I wanted my child to learn religion in school, I would put him in a private school. Thank you for your time.

Erin Throckmorton
Self/Program Manager
Spring, TX

I ask that you vote NO to this bill. Once you open up the classroom to any religion, you open it up to all. It may be tempting to impart your own religious beliefs on Texas students, but it is a slippery slope. Imagine a future, where next to the Ten Commandments you will have a pentagram, and in addition to Christian bibles you see the Tanakh and the Quran on the shelf. Children and teachers are already allowed to pray and read their personal religious written materials in their own free time on school property. Once you open Pandora's box, you cannot close it.

Minda Caesar

self (also a Spring Branch ISD Trustee, but testifying for myself)

Houston, TX

I am concerned about two things in this bill: 1) this is an unfunded mandate. Districts will have to bear the expense of complying with this law at a time that most are facing financial cliffs. 2) I am concerned that this bill violates the establishment clause of the Bill of Rights -- "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." There has been a great deal of noise in the conservative press that perhaps the founding fathers did not really intend church and state to be separate. This is clearly false if you spend even a moment researching the actual words of the founding fathers. According to the First Amendment Encyclopedia: Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, wrote about "a wall or hedge of separation" between the "wilderness of the world" and "the garden of the church." Williams believed that any government involvement in the church would corrupt the church. Jefferson declared that when the American people adopted the establishment clause they built a "wall of separation between the church and state." Thomas Jefferson had earlier witnessed the turmoil of the American colonists as they struggled to combine governance with religious expression. Jefferson created the most famous use of the metaphor "separation of church and state" in a letter where he mentioned a "wall of separation." One of the decisive battlegrounds for disestablishment was Jefferson's colony of Virginia, where the Anglican Church had long been the established church. Both Jefferson and fellow Virginian James Madison felt that state support for a particular religion or for any religion was improper. They argued that compelling citizens to support through taxation a faith they did not follow violated their natural right to religious liberty. The two were aided in their fight for disestablishment by the Baptists, Presbyterians, Quakers, and other "dissenting" faiths of Anglican Virginia. During the debates surrounding both its writing and its ratification, many religious groups feared that the Constitution offered an insufficient guarantee of the civil and religious rights of citizens. To help win ratification, Madison proposed a bill of rights that would include religious liberty.

As a result, I believe that while well intentioned, this bill should not be passed.

Kelly Pattillo

self / project manager

Georgetown, TX

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to urge you to vote AGAINST SB 1515. Requiring schools to post a copy of the Ten Commandments in every classroom is state support for religion, plain and simple. That goes against one of the foundational principles of our government.

If a teacher or school administrator uses the Ten Commandments as principles to guide their personal life, I completely support their right to do so. Those not of the Christian faith have the same right to do so with their own religious principles. Our public schools are not the place for either group to promote their religious beliefs to the other. And mandating the Ten Commandments to be displayed, "legible from anywhere in the classroom", is exactly that sort of promotion.

If the honorable members of the Committee disagree, then I would respectfully ask whether the committee is equally willing to require posting portions of the Torah, Quran, and the Five Precepts of Buddhism.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Allison Stewart

Self

Round Rock, TX

Absolutely not. We are not a Christian nation - so keep your Christo-fascists ideals out of our public schools and start actually doing your real job to fund these schools. Enough with infringing on everyone else's religious liberty. You're wasting our tax dollars with this business and you know it.

Georgia Polley

self

Houston, TX

The Ten Commandments aren't even posted in the church sanctuary of most churches. This is a gross overreach of indoctrination of our youth by our legislature.

Cindy Fountain, Ms

Texas Unitarian Universalist Ministry

Cleburne, TX

I strongly oppose this bill! It is up to me, the parent, to impart religious values to my child, not the school.

Ashley Monachelli, Mrs.

Myself

Houston, TX

This is absurd. As a Christian I find it outrageous that you would try to use God as a political pawn. An embarrassment to live in Texas right now. Much more worried about my school children being gunned down than this nonsense.

Lisa Flores

North Texas Conservatives

Frisco, TX

Having the 10 Commandments displayed for all to read would establish a good foundation for everyone. I believe all, no matter their religion, would agree the 10 Commandments would encourage respect and goodness in our schools.

Kathryn Cruzen, Mrs.

Self / retired

Cypress, TX

Our government has no right to support one religion over another, or to promote any religion anywhere, particularly in our schools where diversity and inclusion, rather than exclusion, should be exercised. Requiring that the Ten Commandments be displayed is promoting one religion over all others, a direct threat to our democracy. Please vote NO on SB 1515.

Sarah Cleveland

Self

Houston, TX

This violates separation of church and state. As a secular person I am deeply offended by the thought of someone pushing their religion on others. This country was founded on religious freedom. The USA is not a religious entity. There are many religions as well as non religious people and no one religion fits everyone. Keep religion out of politics or any government!!!

Robyn Clark

TST

Magnolia, TX

SB 1515 is unconstitutional because it is showing preference to one religion. If you open up this door, you must accept religious pluralism and accept monuments to all religions, such as The Satanic Temple. Do you want a 10 foot tall Baphomet statue next to the 10 Commandments? Bet not. You are know very well that America was not founded as a Christian nation, you are pandering to the extreme right Evangelical constituency. You are all a joke and I can't wait to turn this state Blue and bring common sense and dignity to Texas.

Laurie Duke

self, parent, former educator, temp. work

FORT WORTH, TX

I oppose and ask the committee to vote NO on SB 1515. The amount of disrespect to public school employees is mind blowing. Public school employees from educators, to custodians, to bus drivers and clerks have all gotten back to the business of education following national tragedies. When 9/11 happened we got back to the business of education. When covid hit we made sure kids were fed, switched to virtual and then hybrid after lockdown was lifted. We got back to business. Despite gun violence in our schools and communities we have continued the job of educating our future. What have you done? Have you brought bills to reduce class sizes? No. Have you brought bills to address over use of standardized testing? No. Have you supported bills increasing counseling ratios per student? No. Public schools & public school employees have done their jobs. Its time for this committee to set aside bills like SB 1515 and get busy with bills that solve the real challenges of public education.

SUSAN STEWART

SELF

PFLUGERVILLE, TX

OPPOSED. Never, ever violate the tenets of our Constitution. The founding fathers clearly knew what they were talking about and knew the dangers that come with having religion act as a governing body. OPPOSED ALL THE WAY.

TK Harrison

Myself - citizen

Houston, TX

If the Ten Commandments are going to be required to be displayed in public schools, then any religion will also be allowed to post their commandments or laws as well, correct? Our Founding Fathers created separation of Church and State because they created America as a country with freedom from religion - meaning you didn't have to practice any religion if you didn't want to or have one denomination or sect forced upon you. If someone wants their child in a school that displays and actively preaches the Judeo-Christian religious Ten Commandments - there are private church schools they can attend. I am a life long Christian who was brought up in the United Methodist Church and I am still a practicing Methodist. I attended Texas Christian University for college. I am a staunch believer in separation of Church and State and believe if children are taught to be kind and inclusive and understanding of others at school, they are being taught the Golden Rule. Do unto others is a universally welcomed sentiment in all religions. Stop forcing your beliefs on other people's children - it is Un-American and not doing any good for the betterment of our country.

Zan Uchuu

Self

Houston, TX

I am a person who deeply believes in the constitutional separation of church and state. This bill not only chips away at that very part of the constitution, but it down right IGNORES it entirely! The ten commandments is a religious ideation and NOT a legal one. I want my and many other voices who are opposed to this bill heard and the constitutional separation of church and state upheld! I do not want the religious zealots to turn this democracy into a theocracy by inserting their religious beliefs into governing law! STRIKE DOWN THIS BILL IN THE NAME OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!!!

Tracy Butcher
Self/Contractor
Richmond, TX

Dear Congress Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Texas Senate Bill 1515, which would require Texas public schools to display the Ten Commandments in a prominent location. While I understand the desire to promote moral values in our schools, this bill is deeply problematic for several reasons.

First and foremost, the bill violates the establishment clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which prohibits the government from endorsing or promoting any particular religion. The display of the Ten Commandments in public schools would send a clear message that the government favors Judaism and Christianity over all other religions, and would be a clear violation of the separation of church and state.

Secondly, the bill ignores the fact that public schools are meant to be inclusive and pluralistic institutions that serve students of all backgrounds and beliefs. By mandating the display of the Ten Commandments, the bill sends a message to non-Christian students that they are not welcome or valued in our public schools. This is not only morally wrong, but it also undermines the educational mission of our public schools by excluding and alienating students who do not share the majority religion.

Lastly, the bill does not respect the religious freedom of students and their families. Students should be free to practice their own religion, or no religion at all, without fear of coercion or pressure from their school. Mandating the display of the Ten Commandments would be a clear violation of this fundamental right.

In conclusion, I urge you to oppose Texas Senate Bill 1515 and to uphold the Constitution and the principle of religious freedom. Our public schools should be inclusive and pluralistic institutions that serve all students equally, regardless of their religion or beliefs.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Tracy A. Butcher

Casey Williams
Self, teacher and parent
Houston, TX

Please vote no on this bill.

Speaking as a parent, my child should be able to receive his public school education without any show of favor to one religion over another, or even any preference for religion over no religion. When he discusses his thoughts and interests with his peers, it should be with all of them having an equal seat at the table and no interference from the government or its representatives. When he learns about world religions, it should be factual and with care taken against bias or distortion.

As a teacher, I am present for all my students, from every part of the world, with a wide variety of ideas and understandings. It should not be part of my job as an educator to promote or favor any specific viewpoint. Teachers also have the right to our own conscience, and I should not be compelled by the state to violate my deeply held beliefs and ethics. Teachers are so often accused of attempting to indoctrinate students—please don't make it so. When education is compulsory, making children a captive audience, we have a sacred duty to avoid any abuse of that power.

Chris Throckmorton
Self, actuary
Spring, TX

I oppose this proposed legislation as a waste of state resources and an unwarranted infringement of parental rights.

Barbara Yeupell

Self/retired history and government teacher

Harlingen, TX

As a Texan, and especially as a teacher of the principles this country was founded upon, I strongly oppose SB 1515. The message transmitted by requiring a display of the Ten Commandments in classrooms across the state is quite plain: This state endorses the divine code of the Judeo-Christian God. To require such a display is a clear violation of the separation of church and state doctrine of the First Amendment. Nearly 20 percent of Texans are non-religious and another approximately 20% adhere to religions other than Christianity. How uncomfortable it would be for nearly half of our students and school staff to see this representation of a religious view they don't support in each classroom they enter. Even the most ardently devout Christians of my former students understand and agree with the concept that we are all more free when no one imposes their religion on others.

Catharine Wall

Self; Educator (retired)

Austin, TX

This bill is a blatant attempt to further Christian nationalism in our public schools. It's problematic enough that the McCarthy-era "under God" survives in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge, but the Ten Commandments (and especially in the bombastic rhetoric of the version this bill requires!) should be the sole responsibility of parents and families in their private lives if they so choose--not the purview of the state in public-school classrooms. Moreover, it is presumptuous and arrogant for the supporters of this bill to impose their personal religious belief system on all public-school teachers, staff, students, and, by extension, families in Texas in the name of religious liberty. In the bill analysis for S.B. 1515, the statement of intent claims that the bill "reminds students all across Texas" that the Ten Commandments are "a fundamental foundation of American and Texas law." If this is true, they should find a way to incorporate the lessons of these biblical principles into the state curriculum standards as appropriate (although I think it would quickly become clear that most of the Commandments really do not have a legitimate place in the curriculum and therefore do not belong in the classroom).

Thomas Weiss

Self, Oil & Gas Land Systems Analyst

Cypress, TX

Please vote "NO" on this bill.

This is blatant religious indoctrination forced upon minor children. The ten commandments is not the bedrock of our legal system and many other ideas from all over the world have influenced our laws. As a parent with two children in public schools I ask that you respect the rights of Texans who follow other faiths or no faith and don't force your religion upon a captive audience of minors.

Raul Trejo

self

Houston, TX

Texas Moderates and Independents are tired of the American taliban minority trying to eliminate separation of church and state and push it's authoritarian theocracy agenda. Vote no on this bill.

Deborah Leiber

self

THE WOODLANDS, TX

Please vote NO on SB 1515 requiring the 10 Commandments to be displayed in public school classrooms. This bill is a direct violation of the Constitutional separation of Church and State! Public schools should not infringe on parental rights by indoctrinating students in any specific faith tradition. It is wrong from the State to endorse one particular religion.

I respectfully request that you vote NO on SB 1515.

Sincerely,

Deborah Leiber

Jacob Kreusch

Myself

Austin, TX

I won't speak about theocracy because I know you are committed to it. But I must speak on behalf of my little girl born just this last year, and about how even barring the discussion on theocracy the 10 commandments are anti-American at their core.

I am a former Catholic. My wife is a former Buddhist. Both of us are now non-theistic and plan to raise our daughter without pushing faith or a lack of it, leaving it open for her to decide her beliefs. The goal of this bill not only harms our ability to parent her openly, as we will now have to spend her time and ours actively combatting this coercive influence, but it will cause direct harm to her as well.

Imagine my daughter, who will be raised without being pushed into religion, spending every single day seeing not one, but MULTIPLE plaques stating that she "should have no other gods" before the Abrahamic one. In direct violation of her being able to feel equal in choosing for herself, not only does this plaque send a message to an impressionable young girl that she MUST follow the Abrahamic god, but it sends the message that our government endorses such coercion, that our state values her as less.

Imagine the power that this puts into the hands of christian children who already have a tendency to bully and harass non-christians, especially in the rural areas I grew up in. This adds a piece of validation to their beliefs that they can point to and wave in my little girl's face. I know good and well what these kids do because I was one of them. In my hometown of Needville we had an Iraqi refugee move to our school and I watched complacency as not only students, but STAFF made light of his beliefs. And you want to place more validation behind these ideologies?

But I must also remind you that many of the Ten Commandments ARE IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH AMERICAN VALUES.
-Thou will have no other god, Thou must keep the sabbath holy, thou will not take my name in vein, and you shall not make idols...EACH of these is inherently in conflict with the freedoms of speech and religion.
-You shall not covet is inherently at odds with the free market and with the basis of capitalism which promotes avarice, materialism, and pride in possessions/wealth.

Instead of my legislators working to protect my children, I find them wasting my time and taxpayer revenue on how to indoctrinate and harm my child. I understand that zealotry is hot in the deep conservative base right now. I understand that our governor, Gregory Abbott has a soft spot for grooming and indoctrinating children and has made this part of his agenda. But I look to you, my representatives, to be the voice of reason and say "Enough is enough."

Johnny Rhodes

Self, Biomedical Engineer

Missouri City, TX

Please respect the U.S. Constitution by rejecting SB1515. A religious text does not belong in public schools.

Kelly Rhodes

Houston Atheists, Elementary School Nurse

Missouri City, TX

Dear Chairperson Buckley and Members of the Public Education Committee:

I am a mother of three school-aged children, a Registered Nurse working in a public elementary school in southwest Houston, and I am an atheist. I urge you to oppose SB1515. It is unconstitutional and would impose the religious beliefs of others onto my children. This bill would be exclusionary to nearly all religions. Houston is a melting pot of cultures and religions, which promotes empathy and understanding amongst our kids as they get to know their peers and community members. This bill would be divisive, promoting shunning and hostility to anyone whose religious beliefs fall outside those involving the ten commandments.

I urge you to oppose SB1515. Religious iconography does not belong in the public school system.

Sincerely,
Kelly Rhodes

Miranda McKee

Self

Houston, TX

I am glad to see that you are in favor of a community that has a moral compass that is aligned with God, as defined in the Old Testament. However, there are many issues with have such a document in a state/government run institution.

1 With the display in the classroom, are you ready for anyone of any faith that is leading that class to answer questions to your child on who God is? I can say that the view of who God is and what he stands for can be perceived differently across all Christian denominations – so what makes you ready for any teacher (even if Christian) be the one to answer your child’s question about who God is

2 Are you ready for kids to accuse one another of their idols? We all have different idols that turn our hearts toward sin, but do you like it when your spouse tells you that you have sinned? So what makes you ready for your child’s deskmate to tell them they have a false idol?

3 Are you ready for explaining to school age children what using God’s name in vain is? I assume that you have NEVER cursed and used the Lord’s name in vain? Well, with your child seeing this in the classroom EVERYDAY they will be wondering if the words you use (even in those special “justified” circumstances)

4 Are you ready for justifying how you use your Sabbath? Are you REALLY taking a break? What makes the Sabbath Sunday? It doesn’t have to be. Are you really not laboring and not making others labor for you? Are you really spending a day in reflection and not chasing your family to sports, picking up groceries, getting gas (requiring a gas station attendant to run the store) – because I can tell you that there are A LOT of people on the road on Sunday going all over the place.

5 Sure, I will give you Love your Mother & Father. But are you always saying kind things about ALL YOUR ELDERS?

6 Shall not Murder? Murder is not just loss of a heartbeat, it is also the loss of the will to live because you have beaten a person’s soul. Do you realize that? But sure get back to murder in the pure sense – explain this to kindergartners that will have it in the classroom. Explain this to kids who just had the state legislature do NOTHING in response to school shoots that left kids massacred. Explain this when you pass bills that tie doctors hands to not care for women that have miscarried but not passed the fetus and an infection sets in

7 Shall not commit adultery? What about when your kids ponder this and wonder about the programs you watch at home that could make your child think you have a lustful eye for an actor? Sure, its just on TV but its ADULTERY

8 Shall not steal? So when Joey takes a Suzy’s pencil because he “likes” her and boys are just plain awkward in life then he has the class damning him

9 False testimony? You all lie in your campaigns. Throw the mirror up and look at all the commandments you break...

You may want to just stick to a poster on THE GOLDEN RULE “ Do onto others as you would have done to you”.

Cassie McDavid

Self

BURNET, TX

I am firmly against this bill. Religion is practiced and taught at home not in public school. Texans aren't only Christian, this is favoring one religion over another, is dismissive of other religious beliefs, and is attempted indoctrination.

Theresa S Neman, Mrs.

Self/ educator

Spring, TX

Please vote no to SB 1515. This is not a law to improve schools or education.

Our schools should be a place of gathering, a celebration of our differences, not of division.

Our school district has 65 religions represented, as tracked by languages spoken and from places of origin. We are slapping those students in the face by posting the 10 commandments in each room.

Choose to challenge the Supreme Court in other manners.

Keep our children out of your political playground.

Kristina Schweighardt

Self

Cypress, TX

I strongly oppose this bill and hope you will vote No! I do not want to explain to my kindergarten what adultery or coveting is. This bill should not pass!

Christina Cordes

Self

Cedar Park, TX

Please vote against SB 1515. The 10 commandments is a Judeo-Christian writing, and violates separation of church and state.

Mark Wise

Self

Houston, TX

This bill is a clear violation of the First Amendment of the Constitution. I really shouldn't have to say anything else. This country was founded on freedom of religion, not forcing a state religion on everyone. Diversity is a strength. Please vote No on SB 1515.

Milda Scott

Self / Retired

Cibolo, TX

This is an egregious violation of parental rights. Parents should have the freedom to choose what kind of religious education their children receive, and parents should be in control of the timing of that education. Religion is absolutely not within the purview of our public schools. In addition, we should have more respect for all faiths and not expect public school personnel to have to explain this topic to children who question it.

Kathryn Kizer
Access Education RRISD
Austin, TX

I am very opposed to this bill. It is different from the House version, in that, it requires the display, not just allows. This is a huge infringement on religious freedom. We have a very large district, that is very diverse. We have a large Indian and South Asian community that is not Christian.

But most importantly, our nation is not a theocracy!
If we "put God back in the schools", and mass shootings keep happening, then can we finally address the guns? Cause I can already tell you, it's the guns.

Matthew Ackerman
Self
Missouri City, TX

The separation of church and state is clearly being violated by this bill. It is absurd that our leadership feels the need to legislate a school, paid with public funds, to have ancient religious texts for any reason.

The government overreach when it comes to religion is out of control. This bill is just a small step from a larger movement of religious extremism that is bulldozing through the country. Religion is a personal, private choice. These forceful actions and hateful rhetoric have done nothing but alienate people further from belief. This bill will continue that trend. If you want Christianity to survive, this is not the way. "Thou shall not covet they neighbor's wife," displayed in a drab room lit with fluorescent lighting won't give children the sudden epiphany you all seem to think it will. However, it will violate the first clause in the bill of rights. Pretty cut and dry.

Gabriella Battaglia
Self
Austin, TX

This law is unconstitutional and completely unnecessary. The Ten Commandments are a RELIGIOUS TEXT. This needs to be kept out of schools. Parents have the constitutional right to choose their family's religion, not schools. As a taxpayer, my money should not be going to schools that push a religious agenda. Putting the Ten Commandments in schools absolutely does. Are you going to include the steps of the Eightfold path too? No, you're not. No matter what you say this is about forcing a religion on kids.

laikwan pei
Self
Katy, TX

I strong support SB1515 to support religious liberty and history to Texas students

Sherry Eller
Self
Temple, TX

I SUPPORT SB 1515. Please quickly pass this bill. Thank you.

Jaime Puente
Every Texan
Austin, TX

Texas, like most of the nation, is suffering from a severe lack of qualified educators in K-12 public schools, and last year the Texas American Federation of Teachers offered several solutions to this problem. One of them is to guarantee educators the right to use professional judgement when designing their classrooms. Accordingly, the Charles Butt Foundation reported Texas public school parents trust the decisions made by their children's teachers more than any other entity (see <https://charlesbuttdn.org/what-were-learning/2022txedpoll/>). Legislating what may be posted in Texas classrooms, as SB 1515 attempts to do, threatens other attempts by this body to address critical teaching shortages and takes away the right of public school parents to trust the learning environments created by teachers.

No only does SB 1515 require the posting of religious iconography in a public school setting, but it also limits that religious iconography to a single interpretation of a millennia old set of teachings. Sen. King might as well require Cecile B DeMille's 1956 film as historical record while he's at it.

SB 1515 is a ridiculous waste of Legislative time that could be better spent addressing problems students and teachers are actually facing such as poor instructional materials, failing buildings, and low pay.

Bonnie Bogert
Self
Conroe, TX

I am opposed to this bill. This is unnecessary and unconstitutional. Religious texts that are not part of an approved curriculum should not be displayed in public schools.

David Jiang
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Ashley Thornton

Self - Retired College administrator, educational consultant

WACO, TX

I strongly oppose this bill. I have circulated the following letter and have the names of hundreds of signers across Texas who join me in opposing SB 1515. List of signers available upon request:

We, the undersigned, strongly oppose Senate Bill 1515 which would require the Ten Commandments be posted in all elementary and secondary public school classrooms in the state of Texas.

As Americans, we find this to be an unpatriotic contradiction of the right to freedom of religion. Requiring a text from a specific religion to be displayed in state-run public school classrooms, in schools where students are required by law to attend, is clearly establishing a state religion which is expressly forbidden in the bill of rights.

As people of faith, we find this to be an offensive attempt to play politics with one of our sacred texts. Requiring the Ten Commandments to be displayed in public school classrooms, much like requiring prayer, has the effect of elevating the appearance of religiosity while diminishing heartfelt consideration of faith.

As citizens who care about the future of our society, we find this to be an ill-considered distraction from the very real challenges facing our public schools in providing the sound education that is so critically important for our children, our communities, our state, and our whole country.

Nancy Green

Self IT Consultant

Sugar Land, TX

Please do not waste tax payers money on this. We do not need to display the Ten Commandment in schools and we don't need to set ourselves up for lawsuits. Be responsible with tax payers money.

Kristen Elliott

Self

Katy, TX

Dear Chairperson Buckley and Members of the Public Education Committee:

I am a mother of two school-aged children, and I am an atheist. I urge you to oppose SB1515. It is unconstitutional and would impose the religious beliefs of others onto my children. This bill would be exclusionary to nearly all religions. Houston is a melting pot of cultures and religions, which promotes empathy and understanding amongst our kids as they get to know their peers and community members. This bill would be divisive, promoting shunning and hostility to anyone whose religious beliefs fall outside those involving the ten commandments.

I urge you to oppose SB1515. Religious iconography does not belong in the public school system.

Sincerely,

Kristen Elliott

Delaina Bishop

Self/ Parent of young school age children in public schools

Austin, TX

I HIGHLY OPPOSE this bill. Public schools are secular learning institutions which should be respected and kept that way.

Shelby DeWitt

Self, human resources

Kyle, TX

Not only is this a waste of valuable lawmakers time, this is an egregious display of lack of separation from church and state. Your founding fathers that you hold in such high regard for freedom and liberties would be severely disappointed that this was even a possibility.

Jessica Catrett

Self

Houston, TX

Posting the 10 commandments in public school infringes on the rights of parents to be in charge their child's religious education. Allowing this discriminates against families of different faiths and secular families. As a parent I am outraged at this government interference. Vote NO on SB 1515.

Susan Stewart

self

Pflugerville, TX

I VEHEMENTLY OPPOSE this bill. Respect the rights of ALL parents to raise their children as they want. These do not belong in a public school classroom. We are not going back to a time in history when Christians discriminated against black people or women were not allowed to buy a car on their own. This is hypocritical as Texas state lawmakers do not follow the Ten Commandments. Maybe this should be posted in every legislator's office. Lead by example.

Jill Hartman, Mrs

My family and me

San Antonio, TX

We need to keep the 10 Commandments in all public schools!

Danelle Schwertner

Self - retail business owner

Miles, TX

Chairman Buckley, and members of the Public Ed committee,

Please vote no on SB 1515. To require the Ten Commandments to be displayed in public schools is a blatant violation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment. The Supreme Court of the United States determined this in 1980 with Stone v. Graham. This is an essentially religious display, and that is unacceptable in public schools. Not all students are Christian, and unless we want to open a large can of worms regarding display of religious ideology in schools, we need to stay as far away from this as possible.

In addition to being a business owner, I am also an elected school board member at Miles ISD. I cannot say that I speak for the entire board, as we have not discussed this legislation, but I do know that this is a terrible idea, and there are many more important things that need to be taken care of. With all the rhetoric about indoctrination in this political climate, the entire purpose of this legislation is to indoctrinate children, which is not the purpose of public schools.

Vote NO on SB 1515.

Kathy Smith, Mrs
Self / Retired Educator
Katy, TX

The 10 Commandments is a religious teaching from the Judeo/Christian religions. It has absolutely no place being displayed in a public school classroom! There is no secular purpose for displaying the 10 Commandments in public school classrooms. Some of the content of the 10 Commandments is not age appropriate for all students. This bill should NOT pass.

Selina Brown, Ms.
self
sugar land, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students in our country. To display the Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of the righteousness of American and Texas law.

Jun Huang
Self
Katu, TX

Strongly support!

Shawn Reimund
Self/Franchise Coordinator
Pflugerville, TX

This would force religion upon children. This would be indoctrinating children into Christianity. This does not teach children how to think critically so that they can make their own choice about religion. The Republican party that introduced this bill is trying to indoctrinate children, although they project and say it's the other party that is indoctrinating the children.

Any party that tries to force religion upon anyone should be seen as fascist and fascism should have no place in politics anywhere. It is my belief that any member that introduces fascist legislation should be expelled and barred from running for any office in this country. That said, the second part of what I just typed is a belief. It would be wrong to print that belief and force it to appear in every classroom in the state of Texas.

People are free to go to any church, any day, any time they wish or not go at all. I'll be voting soon and will likely be forced to go to a church to do so. To every member of the Texas legislature, The Eyes of Texas are upon you. I refuse to look away. I refuse to stay silent in the face of hatred. I refuse to stay silent when any party is trying to indoctrinate children into any religion.

SB 1515 must be shut down as public schools are not churches.

I urge you to do the right thing and thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Shawn Reimund

Ann-Marie Kennedy
SELF
Conroe, TX

This bill is inappropriate for many reasons. It isn't age-appropriate and it isn't the proper role of elementary school teachers to explain "coveting," just as one very simple example. It is also socially inappropriate, because there are so many religions practiced by school children and their families in the state of Texas. Posting The Ten Commandments tells these students that they do not belong, they are not respected by their school. PUBLIC schools are for ALL students, faculty and staff. This bill doesn't include ALL.

Pei Liu
Self
Carrollton, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Michael Cox
None
Sugar Land, TX

Religious freedoms of this nature should be allowed as they are fundamental basis of our one Nation "Under God"
Too many freedoms have been restricted or eliminated by manipulation of facts and freedom of speech and discussion at most levels has been severely restricted

Jean Leider
Self. Retired Public School Educator
Austin, TX

As a former educator, and Jewish person, I am against this bill. It goes against the separation of church and State that our framers wrote into the Constitution. Religious freedom was the reason this country was founded. Displaying the 10 commandments will make the many non-Christian students, teachers and staff feel alienated. This bill will invite lawsuits thereby draining the already underfunded public schools of much needed resources. This is yet another culture war bill that wastes taxpayers money in order to attract headlines which does nothing to solve real world problems Instead it creates problems.. If you want to help schools, raise the age to buy weapons to 21 and ban assault weapons. When Texas has its next Uvalde mass shooting of small children, the posting of the ten commandments is not going to help.

Lois Gremminger
Self
Richmond, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students by displaying the Ten Commandments. It would remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law to treat others with respect.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Liang Fu, Ms.
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Nianrong Liu
self
Richmond, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Ashley Shan
Self
Missouri city, TX

Support to display of the Ten Commandments in public schools

Robert Bexar II
Self
Houston, TX

Stone v. Graham, 449 U.S. 39, the Supreme Court ruled that a Kentucky law requiring the posting of the Ten Commandments on the wall of every public school classroom in the state violated the establishment clause of the First Amendment. This was ruled because the purpose of the display was essentially religious. This bill that Rep. King is proposing is for the very same reason and is in violation of the First Amendment. While the Ten Commandments do fall under the Abrahamic religions, there are many other religions that do not follow these religions and this is a violation of the very freedoms that our government is supposedly based on. This is nothing but an attempt to force church and state together when there is a clear divide. I taught Intro to American Government for 6 years down here in Houston. If Mr. King would like me to come up to Austin and give him a free course on the Bill of Rights, I will be more than happy to travel up there on my own dime. Maybe show him how he is violating a variety of civil rights and liberties.

Jianjun Wang, Dr
self
Richmond, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Elaine Chen
Self
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Beth LoGiudice
Self - editor
Round Rock, TX

This bill is a direct violation of the separation of church and state noted in the US Constitution. No public school should be REQUIRED to display any religious text or iconography. The Constitution of the US guarantees freedom of religion for ALL PEOPLE, not only those who follow the Judeo-Christian Bible. It also guarantees freedom FROM religion, especially and specifically in government or public services. Public school is exactly that: for all of the public, whether they are religious or not. This blatant attempt to push specifically Judeo-Christian doctrine into the public school system is an attack on the freedoms for which this country was founded, and I am appalled that this type of legislation is how the state government is choosing to spend its time and taxpayer money.

Eve Margolis
self
Austin, TX

I oppose this bill. Displaying the 10 commandments anywhere in a school goes against the legal separation between church and state. The conservative direction of "back to basics" does not include religion. If religion is brought into the schools, all religions need to be brought into the schools to represent of all students.

If this is allowed then it is imperative that all other religions have their principles posted right next to it.

Odulia Ashby
Self
Cibolo, TX

My parental rights to teach my child religious freedom is being violated by early indoctrination within Texas schools, if the ten commandments are displayed in each classroom. Parents should have the freedom to choose what kind of religious education their children receive, and parents should be in control of the timing of that education. Religion is absolutely not within the realm of our public schools educators to explain to students.

Public schools paid for by tax payer funding should remain unbiased and unswayed in all areas, especially religion. I expect that all forms of religious paraphernalia be allowed alongside the ten commandments to ensure equity and diversity of all or no religions preference.

Are all Texas public schools now being transformed into madrasas? I do not send my child to a catholic, christian or private school to keep them away from religious indoctrination. Now you want to leave me without a choice for an unbiased and religious free education. Public schools will continue to fail because you refuse to focus on educating children, providing adequate school funding, & paying teachers/staff competitive wages. Yet you waste time on miniscule matters such as passing petty bills that continue to waste tax payer funding.

Kristen Langdon
Self
Tomball, TX

No!!!! This is absolutely ridiculous. If this is allowed then other religions should be able to display their signs as well. This is 100% indoctrination and I strongly oppose. My kids DO NOT go to a private, Christian school. SEPERATION OF CHURCH AND STATE!!!!!!!!!!!! I will fight this to the end. No, no, no!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! These Christian extreme leaders are ruining our schools with their radical ideas. It's becoming embarrassing and the rest of the world is laughing at us. Texas is such a backwards state, starting with our "leaders."

Jing Shen
Self
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Kimberly Liu
Self
Katy, TX

Absolutely support the display of the Ten Commandments in public schools!

Texas needs the Commandments!
The kids in Texas need the Ten Commandments!
Our nation needs Jesus!
Our nation is so messed up with all kind of bad ideas. We need the law and order to restore our country!

Matthew Brown
self
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support SB1515.

Christianity is the base of the history of this country and the western traditions.

At this time, Muslim students are afforded great latitude for their prayer time and study within the public schools. There is glaring favoritism in this case, due to a willful misinterpretation of the founding.

I believe that all religions should have educational representation in our society, in order to increase understanding and tolerance of all viewpoints and cultures. Denying the history of the Jewish and Christian traditions skews the education in one direction. This has led to the apparent ridiculing of the Christian and Jewish faiths, shaming those students into a second class status.

Jefferson's misinterpreted comments were to keep any religion from being the establishment/governmental religion, as an authoritarian, religious based governmental ruling sect (think Iran). He was replying to church goers that were worried that they would be attacked by an established religion.

Conversely, Jefferson was very religious, very Christian, and wanted open dialogue on this and all topics. He did not want to see ALL religion thrown out of the government and civics, as we do today.

This bill can help to restore religious liberty, education, and tolerance among all of our students and display of Ten Commandments or any display as part of a balanced religious presentation can open the eyes of our students. The Judeo-Christian tradition is the fundamental foundation of American and Texas law, and that FACT should not be hidden from our students.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of the fundamentals behind this great American experiment.

Janis Fiske-Genest

SELF/Retired

Tomball, TX

I am opposed to this bill that requires every Texas classroom to display the Ten Commandments. I am a Christian and believe in separation of Church and State. Religion should be taught in the home, at church and if parents choose in private religious schools. Moral education in schools is important. There are many posters that could be displayed in the classroom that reflect similar beliefs to the 10 Commandments that are not religious based. Teachers of younger children are going to have to explain adultery, coveting a neighbors wife, what are graven images or taking the Lords name in vain. This puts another burden on the hardworking classroom teacher.

We live in a very religiously diverse nation. If you recognize the Ten Commandments in the classroom then you must also recognize and display commandments from the many religions practiced in Texas.

Thank you for your time,
Janis Fiske-Genest

Alexandra Vriend

Self

Lewisville, TX

I strongly oppose this bill. This is so harmful to religious freedom, and it creates a spirit of fear of White Christian Nationalism that encourages fascism. The only reason you would do this is if you want to secure in the minds of children the idea that Christianity and the authority of the state are the same thing. This is a blatant bid for excessive power and it is an affront to the lives of so many people.

Jun Luo

Self

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Anna Pittala

self

Austin, TX

I am against SB 1515. I believe in separation of church and state. Since public schools are funded with my tax dollars, they should not display any religious prayers or documents. Please vote against SB 1515.

Bo Yang

Self and engineer

Missouri City, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Corey Wallis
Self
Fort Worth, TX

The Ten Commandments SHOULD NOT be on display. Students and teachers have the freedom of religion. As a seminary student and future pastor, I am appalled at this attempt to wield Christianity like a club. This is awful and Texas should be ashamed.

Celina Bautovich
self- Account Executive
The Woodlands, TX

This is ridiculous! I have a 1st grader and a 4th grader and do not need them seeing adultery in their classroom. I live in The Woodlands and we have a large diverse group of kiddos at our schools. It is not a good idea to FORCE children to see the 10 commandments. This should be something that should be taught by parents if they choose to. Why are you wasting time and money on this dumb bill. Please focus on making public education better for our children. Texas children deserve THE BEST and right now Texas education funding is close to last place.

Winnie Sim
Self. Teacher.
Missouri City, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Helena Liu, Mrs.
Individual
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Xiangzheng Tao
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Hugh Liu, Mr
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Yuxiu Song
Self
Katy, TX

Ten Commandments is the gift the Creator gives to human. Though some people do not understand it in the beginning, it brings basic principles to guide people's daily living. We all need to figure out the true GOD and love people as ourselves. I am an immigrant from a country without belief. I know what kind of society I had lived. America should keep their best tradition: Fear the Lord, living out Love and Truth.

Gan Xia
Self
Katy, TX

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Texas needs law and order!

Melanie Masten
Self, Software Developer
Cypress, TX

I am opposed to this bill. It's completely unnecessary. Schools are already teaching children to be good, kind, and empathetic citizens. Forcing teachers to have the ten commandments on display in their classrooms is a poor use of the limited real estate they get for educational materials. Public school is for secular education and good citizenship. It's not the place for specific religious indoctrination. This bill is extremely insensitive to those of us with religious trauma who wish to protect our children from the idea that a "God," who's existence is not proven, has given them arbitrary rules that they have to abide by or face some eternal punishment. The term commandment implies that a punishment is imminent from disobedience and I object to my kids being subject to this. I would accept a substitute of "Ten Principles for Good Citizens" which are written by a committee of persons from various religious and non religious backgrounds.

Josh Duncan
Self
The Woodlands, TX

As a Republican and a Christian, I think this is a horrible idea. It is divisive, unnecessary, and doesn't change anything related to educational outcomes which should be the focus of any legislation. It is this type of legislation that pushes independents and moderates to question their alignment to conservative issues of greater importance. This bill is full of unintended consequences and must be abandoned.

Nikki Henrichsen
Self/Homemaker
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commandments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Jingxu He
self
Katy, TX
Support

Mark Smith
Self
Austin, TX

I am amazed that the Texas Legislature is contemplating the passage of this bill. Requiring every classroom to display the Ten Commandments is not only a flagrant violation of the First Amendment Establishment Clause, it is also, in parts, wildly irrelevant and will cause nothing but confusion. Thou shalt not kill or steal or commit adultery, okay. But thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's manservant? Really? And you don't want kids to read books that have sex in them, but you want them to explain the concept of adultery to first graders? And what goofy version of the ten commandments is this anyway? It is not the King James version, which also includes the commandment not to covet thy neighbor's ass. This seems to be some abridged version. So you're censoring the ten commandments, too? Wow. This is a bad bill. Please let it die in committee.

Kathleen Pittman
Self, Artist, retired Art Educator
San Antonio, TX

I beleive in separation of church and state. The proposed requirement of posting the Ten Commandments in public school classrooms voilates this separation. It also infringes on the freedom of releigion as well as freedom from religion.

Erin Miller
self
Spring, TX

This bill seems to violate the First Amendment by forcing public schools to display the Ten Commandments. I'm all for bringing back morality but not forcing religion on public educators or students within the public school systems of Texas.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Kristina Prohaski

self

Fort Worth, TX

The decision to return the Ten Commandments back into schools is really a moot effort. I understand and can appreciate efforts to get students to the "root" of American history, but we cannot pick and choose the roots. Founding Fathers built the nation under what is now the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They didn't found the nation on the Ten Commandments.

* Thou shalt have no other gods before me - what does that say to students who aren't tied to a religion, are we setting them up to be bullied

* Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image - are we to forbid students from drawing or art; will we censor and who decides that

* Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain - again, who is to determine what is "vain"

* Thou shalt not kill - that's pretty obvious; but school isn't growing people who are going to kill, that's based on other influences

* Thou shalt not steal - that's obvious, but people do it any way

* Honor they father and they mother - some students have really horrible parents, and asking them to honor them in the face of that ignores the trust they are building with their academic community

* Thou shalt not commit adultery - is that really an issue you worry about with students if we aren't even giving them a comprehensive sex education program?

* Remember they Sabbath - which day will be Sabbath as some religions celebrate Friday and others Saturday, will we cancel games and events on those days

* Thou shalt not covet - will this pertain to kids who aren't getting fed 3 meals a day and are fighting to keep free lunches just so they can eat

* and no false idols - well no one is really explaining to kids what this means.

Honestly, these principles, while well intended are outdated, often misinterpreted and subject to bullying people who don't believe. Let's focus on teaching kids reading, writing and math and let's leave the 10 Commandments in the Sunday school classroom.

THANK YOU,

Kristina Prohaski

Annette Martinez, Ms.

Self Retired Special Education Teacher

Austin, TX

I am against SB 1515.

This bill is another waste of money on legal fees that could be better spent on public education because this bill is so similar to bills that have already been struck down by the U. S. Supreme Court.

Classroom wall space is often at a premium. What educational poster would you have the teachers take down to make room for the unnecessary "10 commandments" of some people's religion? Dual language schools and bilingual classrooms will need it in both languages.

As a retired special education teacher, I know that many special education students need distractions kept to a minimum. They don't need an unnecessary distraction like a poster that has no educational value.

What about the "commandments" of other religions? Why can't children raised in those religions see their "commandments" in their classrooms?

If you want YOUR child to see the 10 commandments of YOUR religion at school, you are free to plaster it on THEIR backpacks, notebooks, pencils, etc.

Please vote against this unconstitutional waste of time.

Paul Laskoski

Self

Spring, TX

I oppose SB 1515. The requirement of SB 1515 is for a 16x20 inch poster, put in a "conspicuous place" in every classroom. Like the In God We Trust posters, if donated a school MUST display them. The bill's language is such that the text is not presented in an age-sensitive way--so first grade teachers will have to explain adultery, coveting a neighbor's wife, manservant or maidservant, and what are graven images or taking the name of the Lord in vain. The commandment "Thou shall not kill" implies that all killing, including self defense, warfare, or capital punishment (which is legal in Texas) are against God's will. This bill is clearly anti-Constitutional, showing governmental endorsement of abrahamic religions. There is no effort in the bill to include texts from any other faith traditions. With all the focus on parental rights--what about the rights of parents whose faith is not Judeo-Christian? What about the rights of parents who would prefer that THEY be the ones to explain the 10 Commandments to their child at the time/place they choose, not a classroom teacher?

James Ransdell

Self

Seguin, TX

Please pass this bill we all need the Ten Commandments

Xingzhong Shi, Dr.

Katy Christian Community Church

Richmond, TX

In God We Trust!

In God We Shall Remind Our Next Generations To Trust!

NIV Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Qin Chen

Self

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Joanna Li

Self

Richmond, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Kim Horton
Self/ teacher
Weatherford, TX

Please pass this bill that allows schools to display the Ten Commandments in the school areas. The more we can acknowledge God's way's to children and young adults, the more of a godly and peaceful society we will inherit. Thank you!

Linda Litzinger
self, public policy specialist
Austin, TX

As a Christian who also believes in separation of church and state, I am opposed to this bill. Thank you.

Kathy Haigler
Self - Election Consultant
Dale, TX

I strongly SUPPORT SB 1515. It's time to invite morality back into the classrooms of Texas!

Nan Shen
Self Engineer
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support the display of the Ten Commandments in public schools.

Tali Wildman
Self
Austin, TX

I am a parent of a child in Texas public school. I oppose this bill, and believe it's passing would be a violation of my family's constitutional rights, specifically the first clause in the U.S. Bill of Rights that states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." Moreover, this is indoctrination of our children and a violation of their freedom of speech and beliefs.

Cameron Samuels
Students Engaged in Advancing Texas (SEAT)
Katy, TX

As an organization dedicated to pluralism and individual freedoms, including the free expression of religion, Students Engaged in Advancing Texas opposes SB 1515. In schooling our state's youth, this bill mandates a single religious identity on a state with significant religious diversity, including 20% who do not affiliate with any religion, according to the Public Religion Research Institute. Separation of church and state is a core principle of our state and national identity, and this legislation would, in fact, indoctrinate young people of our state. Students deserve an education where they are free to practice religion as they please, and this legislation deprives students – and their parents – from choosing what is right for them. Let's stick to the basics – let's value freedom of expression in public education.

Becky Julian
Na
Spring, TX

I do not support this.

Emily Holzner

Self

Austin, TX

Separation of church and state. I am against the displaying of the 10 commandments in public schools.

Mau Kwan Tang

Self, Pastor

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Crystal Villarreal

Self, Teacher

Mission, TX

Displaying the 10 commandments in the classroom is wrong as it goes against the beliefs of certain students and teachers who may not follow the teachings of Christianity. Moreover, it is important to keep the issues regarding church and state separate to ensure that everyone feels included and respected in the learning environment. Mixing religious beliefs with matters pertaining to the state can lead to the marginalization of some individuals and is not in line with the principles of secularism and equality. Furthermore, the 10 commandments have NOTHING to do with our TEKS and curriculum and have no place in an educational setting.

Liang Sun

Self. Engineer.

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because the display of Ten Commandments will remind our students the precious gift that the CREATOR had given to human beings.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 so that our next generation know the fundamentals of American value: Fear the LORD, living out love and truth.

Thank you.

Debra Hensley

North Texas Conservatives

Cresson, TX

Having the Ten Commandments in public schools in my opinion would help build character. It would allow for children to learn right from wrong biblically. It may change the life of a child for the better. Basic principles in life act as a guide.

Tracy Boggs

North Texas Conservatives

Weatherford, TX

Fully Support restoring our society from Emotions to a foundation that was written by man inspired by God.

Donna Swartz

MCRW

Waco, TX

I am in support of this bill. The 10 commandments are the foundation of our nation. We need a firm foundation for what is right and good! A standard for our children!

Joshua Xia

Self

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

Chunfa Wu, Retiree

Self

Richmond, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Carmen Padua

Self

Cedar Park, TX

Not in favor. This does not create a sense of inclusivity in the classroom for all children , many kids in my community and in the schools my kids go to are not professed Christians and this sign gives the message that Christianity is favored and accepted over other religions. Our country has been a beacon of freedom of religion and the classroom is where children learn their first lessons in life on acceptance of how people live and how people worship. Putting up Christian signs and no other religion sends a clear message of who is accepted in Texas and who isn't. This is a step backwards for Texas , people do not want to live in a place that will not move forward with progress. Texas is going to be left behind with bills like this.

K Lane

Self

Houston, TX

I am a Christian. Raised Baptist in San Antonio where I was heavily involved in the church youth group. Church is important. But so is public education. And in order for both to thrive they should remain separate. Items specific to one religion should not be displayed in a public school. Doing so necessarily excludes some students, and that is not what Christianity is about. The Christianity that I was raised on and still practice today is about love, acceptance, and inclusion. It's about teaching and showing through our actions that everyone is welcome. Most importantly it's about each individual's right you choose whether or not to accept Jesus into their heart. That's the crux of Christianity - a person's choice. It can't, and shouldn't be, forced on someone. They should come to it willingly and with open understanding. There's a place for the Ten Commandments. A place for them to be taught. Public schools are not that place. Public schools are a place where Christians can teach acceptance and love, and show through actions that everyone is welcome in this world. Let's show kids what true Christianity is - loving people for who they are. If we do that, they will come.

John Lane
Self
Houston, TX

No religion should be promoted in a public school classroom. Period. This proposal is unconscionable. It is un-American. And it must not pass.

Brittany Thomas
Self- educator
Lewisville, TX

Displaying the 10 commandments in public schools completely disrespects all of the other religions represented in our communities. School is not the place to teach religion that is for the place of worship.

Elementary aged students don't need their teacher explaining to them what adultery and coveting is.

Lulu Wang
self
SUGAR LAND, TX

I fully support SB1515 because this bill will help to restore the religious liberty to the students in the public schools, and the display of Ten Commitments can remind the students the root and the foundation of the law making for United States and the state of Texas. The ultimate boundary and justice for the human society can ONLY be from GOD.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more fundamentals of this country, this state and having more opportunities to seek for the truth of the lives.

Thank you.

Hongfei Wu
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 . Free religion is one of American best value, but sometimes it was abused. SB1515 serves as the first step to bring our students back to the fundamental foundation of American and Texas law: One Nation, One God.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to help our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Linney Rank
AISD
Austin, TX

What if posters donated from other religions are displayed? Freedom to religion is one of our America rights! Only putting the 10 camándments, is indoctrinating.

Mellany Lamb
North Texas Conservatives
Flower Mound, TX

Please support this bill. All Texas schools need the blessing of the Ten Commandments displayed.

Victoria Dobbs
Self retired teacher
Eules, TX

I am a Christian and a retired teacher (homeschool and private school). I do not see the need for this bill. I love and taught the 10 Commandments. I do not think we need to post them in public schools. We can teach character without posting them. I am sensitive to the variety of children and their faiths. I prefer sharing my faith in love—relationally— rather than communicating that belief is a requirement.

Marshelle Meeks
Self
Hickory Creek, TX

We took out the Ten Commandments from our schools, and they are falling apart. Put God back into our schools.

Susan Masters
None
San Antonio, TX

Our country as well as our State of Texas were founded and chartered by Godly principles. Ever since the 10 Commandments we're removed from schools, the moral grounding in education has slowly disappeared. Please put back the 10 Commandments in schools!

Jennifer Sabolcik
Self
Austin, TX

Please keep the separation of church and state! I do not believe in any kind of religion, but I respect many other types of religion that people want to practice at churches, temples, mosques etc. Not schools! Schools are for learning about everything in a neutral way, which does not include being preached at by Christians. I vote no against posting the Ten Commandments in public schools. Just no.

Ian McPherson
NTX Conservatives
Carrollton, TX

I strongly support this bill. It both affirms the precepts on which the United States founded, and provides important guidelines for youth.

Janie Brittain
Self
Garland, TX

Please vote for SB 1515. This is a simple bill which should have no opposition. Our judicial system is built on the Ten Commandments. Public school children should be educated in this area.

Gloria Morrow
Self
Austin, TX

I vote in favor of this bill

Janet Zhan
Self
Richmond, TX

We support the SB 1515, we school choice, we are against tax increase. Public school use too much tax fund and made a big mess in the school. Let girls be girls and boys be boys?Try to teach them to accept LGBTQ is raping, killing and destroying our future generation. It must be stopped.

Jena Masquelier
Self
Frisco, TX

Please display the Ten Commandments again in schools. God is what is missing. Obedience and respect come form following the word of our Lord, and this is how our country was founded.

Yan Li
self stay at home mom
katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Xiangwen Wang
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Joseph Middleton
Self
Houston, TX

As a Christian and a Texan, I find this bill to be an unnecessary waste of taxpayer money and a clear betrayal of the Founding Fathers' intent to have a separation between Church and State. Keep Church out of Government and keep Government out of my Church.

Yonglin Yang
Self
Katy, TX

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Joanna Crawford

self

Round Rock, TX

As an ordained minister, I urge you to please oppose SB 1515. In 1836, Stephen F. Austin wrote, "We are trying to banish from our homes religious intolerance and despotism, and to establish in the place of it, liberty and freedom of conscience. How many thousands of families of all denominations might find a home in Texas if religious toleration were once firmly rooted there!" Religious toleration prohibits prioritizing one religion over another. Displaying the Ten Commandments clearly gives special rights to certain religions. Faith development should be done in our houses of worship and homes, not in public schools. OPPOSE SB 1515.

Jiayi Zhang

Self

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

ying liu

self

katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Francisca Rios

self

Houston, TX

There is a separation of church and state in our constitution. There is no reason why this should be imposed to schools. There is also freedom of religion. I don't believe in this religion therefore my tax dollars should not have to pay for this to be taught in school.

Lijia Gan

Self

Rockwall, TX

Support SB 1515

Yanyan Zhang

Self

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Chenxin Ding

Self

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Debbie Havranek

Myself

Allen, TX

I support getting Ten Commanments back in schools

Hayden Cohen

Students Engaged in Advancing Texas (SEAT), Self

Houston, TX

I ask that you vote nay on this bill.

Students Engaged in Advancing Texas is an organization of students aiming to have a voice in the political environment and I oppose this bill. This bill forces teachers and students to recognize and prioritize a specific religion's beliefs in public schools by having a large display of that religion's rules in every classroom. A public school is a place for all students of all faiths and beliefs to feel supported and welcomed and this bill would do the complete opposite.

I graduated high school not long ago where we were taught about different religions and I had the opportunity to have friends and classmates from different faiths with different beliefs. I learned about all the religions but never was it ok for our teacher to announce that one religion was more "more right" or "superior" than any other. By having the ten commandments displayed, it would do just that. Let the parents educate their kid's about that if they choose to do so. This is a clear support of Christian nationalism by forcing it in classrooms so don't let that happen.

Sincerely, a Jewish Texas student.

Lynda Buckley

Self

Dallas, TX

Seriously? In what universe does ONLY the Christian faith exist? If the Christian 10 commandments must be posted, then so should every other religion's tenets be posted. Hindu, Buddhism, Muslim, Jewish, Baha'i, Wiccan, Atheism, ad infinitum
Vote against this ridiculous, exclusive, Christian nationalistic bill!

Fiona Botwinik

Self

Sugar land, TX

I support SB1515.

Erin Bingham

self

Spring, TX

Until we can be inclusive and respectful of ALL religions, I disagree strongly with this bill.

Wanzhi Fan

Self

Brookshire, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Kristen Harris

Self

McKinney, TX

My name is Kristen Harris, and I am participating in the Respect Campaign with Texas AFT because I am a teacher and parent who is passionate about public education as the foundation of our democracy, and I want it to be excellent for all. Because of this, I came to Austin today and met with several Representatives' staffers but didn't get to share my testimony against SB1515, but I still want to share what I would have said:

This is a distraction and unnecessary not how our time should be spent. If we want to talk about good morals in education, let's talk about the moral responsibility to properly fund education. Our schools are hemorrhaging teachers right now, and no one is "waiting in the wings" to take our spots. We are fed up with how much our hands are being tied with legislation, how we are being called pedophiles and groomers at our own school board meetings, how we are being burdened with the roles of first responders, how little support we receive with behavior management, and so much more.

The students have checked out. They're bored with a test-centered curriculum that we don't get to choose. They're extremely overtested. They're being forced to sit in a room for six or more hours a day, multiple days per year, for the sake of "accountability" testing that is flawed beyond measure, especially for low-income children and their schools. And then you've spent your time pushing ESAs and vouchers so that you can send your kids to fancy private schools on the state's dime to avoid the very picture I've described that was, in fact, largely caused by people who have never taught writing the rules about teaching. As part of our Respect Campaign, I urge you instead to create professional and respectful working conditions by ending the censorship of professional educators, raising our pay to reflect the amount of respect you claim to have for those in our profession, and ending the misguided overemphasis on STAAR.

How does it make any sense that lawyers and doctors and CEOs make six figures while the people who laid the foundation for their success both academically and emotionally make a fraction of that, have almost no say in how they do the jobs they were trained to do, and watch as funding gets pushed into others' hands. What will you do when there aren't enough teachers left?

We're almost there.

Xinyu Zhang

Self / engineer

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill will help our next generations to realize the importance of Ten Commandments as the fundamental foundation of American and Texas Law. This is not only the religious liberty, but also the historical truth to remember and respect.

Jessica Legut

Parent

Cypress, TX

I do not want my kids learning any type of religion let alone in public school. Religion does not belong in public school period!
Do not pass this bill.

Rebecca Hughes

Self

Fort Worth, TX

I am against SB 1515. Public schools should not be required to display the Ten Commandments in classrooms. First the Country was founded on religious freedom. The line between Church and State must be maintained. We are a Nation with many different religious ideologies. Public Schools should be focused on educating not pushing a certain religion.

I understand the reason Republicans want to push this Bill. It is not an honorable reason. This Country is not a Christian Nation. The Supreme Court should not be pushed into declaring that one religion is favored in this Country.

Please vote against SB 1515.

Rebecca Hughes

76116

Stephen Vera

Self

San Antonio, TX

Can we please remember that within our system of governance, there needs to be a separation of church and state? What good will having the Ten Commandments being displayed in classrooms do? Are we going to allow other symbols of morality from other religions such as Buddhism and satanism to be displayed as well? If not, how is this fair and just?

Mary Nall

Self Retired

Wylie, TX

Please pass sb1515

Mark Chancey

self

Dallas, TX

As a biblical studies professor and a Christian, I oppose the posting of the Ten Commandments in public schools. Doing so unconstitutionally promotes some religious traditions over others in the classroom. It sends the message to students of traditions other than Judaism and Christianity and students who identify with no tradition that they are not equal citizens. It offends me to see a text that is so important to my own religious tradition used this way for political gain.

XIULI Dong

Self engineer

Katy, TX

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 because this will allow public schools to display Ten Commandments , can remind our students to follow the fundamental foundation of American and Texas laws.

Thank you.

Tavia Kidwell

Self

Mckinney, TX

I think it would be great to have the 10 Commandments in the public schools as a reminder of our standards which we should all live by.

Madhavi Prasad, Dr

Self

Houston, TX

This bill imposes religious indoctrination in our public schools. I pay taxes to improve education not cripple it with religious bigotry and installation of nazi style propaganda in our schools . If religious people want to remove the division between church and state as our founding fathers so designed, they may pay for private schools to indoctrinate their children as it is their freedoms to choose so. My freedom to be free of Taliban style religious indoctrination is being violated by this and several other nazi style bills being introduced by convenient and hypocritical christian politicians. The Ten Commandments does not belong in schools. Teach your own children your religious beliefs on your own dime and use my tax dollars to actually fix real world problems. We did not spend 20 years at war with religious zealots just to bring the same tyranny back to destroy democracy. If you pass this law as you have passed the book banning and your anti lgbt agenda, you are worse than they are.

Jack Byrom

Self

Houston, TX

I am a Christian, guided by the faith instilled in me by family from a young age. My grandfather was the President of San Marcos Baptist Academy and a preacher for more than 50 years. In our family, we were taught to honor God and model his grace in the lives of all we meet. I support the goal of providing a firm foundation for our children's spiritual growth. SB 1515 does not move that goal forward. Instead, it alienates members of the population Christians should be most open to receiving: non-believers and those of different faiths. When a child of a different faith, or who was raised with no faith, sees the King James translation of the Ten Commandments in his or her classroom, the message being sent to that child is that their experience, their life, is less valuable, less important, and less worth discussing than those around them. This will even apply to some denominations within Christianity, as different translations are rampant among practitioners of our large, welcoming umbrella. Faith should be something children are taught to love and seek willingly, and forced displays such as this teach the opposite. I urge the House not to forget the command of Christ, who said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." We let our children come to Christ not through force, but by living lives that encourage our children, by example, to seek a life of faith. My grandfather is no longer here to offer his views, but I stand confident in the conviction that he would not see this legislation as furthering the mission of the church.

If that is not enough reason to vote against this bill, then I must appeal to those among you who know this bill is unconstitutional. The state simply cannot impose religious reading upon its public schoolchildren. Whether at the trial court level or on appeal, it will be struck down, and the State of Texas will have to pay attorneys' fees and costs to those who prevail in their civil rights claims, as they surely will. This increases the burden to the taxpayer for a bill that is plainly unconstitutional on its face and which will not further the mission of the church. In other words, this costs money, fails to accomplish its stated goal, and alienates anyone outside the faith.

The truth is, many senators and representatives in these chambers know this bill does not demonstrate good stewardship of faith or good governance of their constituents. I am confident that any proponent of this bill would fiercely oppose any bill mandating the publication of religious from other faiths in a classroom. That reality may never come to pass, but the Constitution exists to protect Christian children the day that it does. Passing this mandatory and futile bill will only seek to embolden further undermining of faith in future. I implore you to vote against this bill, and to return to creating a path to faith that people follow willingly.

Rebecca Black
Self, coach
San Antonio, TX

Religious displays do not belong in public schools, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or otherwise. Requiring public schools to display the ten commandments of the Christian bible is grossly exclusionary to any child who is not a Christian, and is completely inappropriate in a state institution. Please do not press one religious doctrine on every child in the public school system.

Wei Kinard
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Hai Wang, Dr.
Self
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Hui Jiang
Self, engineer
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Tiehong Tian
Self
Katy, TX

I support the bill.

Melissa Palomarez
Self, public education
Cypress, TX

I urge the house to shut down SB 1515. Please understand that as a person who practices a different religion than the one that follows the Ten Commandments, it will be my goal, as well as the goal of thousands, to make sure that ALL religions are represented equally. Yes, this includes The Church of Satan. The decision will cause massive lawsuits with the ACLU, potentially costing this state millions of dollars. It is not worth it.

Please remember we are all free to practice our respective religions. Everyone is free to attend their local church to hear all about the Ten Commandments. Adding it to the walls of our public schools will not assist the church is receiving new members. All it will do is cost the state time and money.

Additionally, if I student asks me, a non-Christian, to explain the Ten Commandments that are on the wall, I am not trained in religious education. I will answer their questions factually and historically (not biblically), as public educators always should.

Becky Calzada
Self-educator
Leander, TX

I am opposed to this bill due to concerns with freedom of religious conscience, religious inclusiveness and infringement of parents' rights to introduce the commandments' concepts at their own pace.

Esteban Puente
Self. Mechanic
Houston, TX

This bill is a complete violation of our constitutional rights. Specifically the 1st amendment and the Establishment Clause. If you pass this bill, I will vote against anyone who ever votes in support of this bill until they no longer serve in public office and advocate for the ACLU to file suit against this

Amber Downing
Self - SAHM
Austin, TX

In order to maintain a separation of church and state, as well as freedom of religion, SB 1515 must not be passed. Public schools serve neighbors of all backgrounds and beliefs and the state of Texas must not trample on others' Constitutionally granted rights by requiring the Ten Commandments in public schools.

Liling Huang
Self
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Emily Xu

Self , homemaker

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Nancy Frankel

Self

Jersey Village, TX

I oppose this bill and encourage you to oppose it too. I do not want my grand daughter's teacher to explain adultery to her.

Ligang Lei

Self

Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and the display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals.

Sara Teel, Ms.

Teacher

Johnson City, TX

The Constitution calls for separation of Church and State. This bill is unconstitutional. The US Bill of Rights calls for religious freedom. Displays of Ten Commandments on public grounds goes directly against our religious rights as Americans. Public spaces are for ALL of the public, especially institutions government and academia.

Marcia Shea

Self

Friendswood, TX

As a non Christian I object. You are infringing on my First Amendment rights.

Helen Fremin

Self

Austin, TX

The Constitution calls for separation of Church and State. This bill is unconstitutional. The US Bill of Rights calls for religious freedom. Displays of Ten Commandments on public grounds goes directly against our religious rights as Americans. Public spaces are for ALL of the public, especially institutions government and academia.

Kim Gokhale
Self
Round Rock, TX

Government cannot give special treatment to one religion. Requiring schools to display ten commandments while excluding any mention of other religions clearly exposes a bias towards one religion, in SB1515. As a Hindu citizen who believes in the pluralistic society of United States, I oppose this bill. Please note that Texas is home to the second-largest Indian-American population in the US, behind only the state of California. I urge all the senators, congressmen, and other elected officials to vote "No" on this bill. (Source: <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/2020/10/08/texas-has-the-second-largest-indian-american-community-in-the-us-politicians-have-finally-noticed/?outputType=amp>)

Sanket PATOLE
self and job
Austin, TX

Please vote against this bill as students can belong to diverse religious, spiritual, cultural and other backgrounds and no one religion or belief should be publicized or advertised in the public schools.

Brenda Howard
Self
Belton, TX

I am submitting written testimony on behalf of myself. I am FOR the bill.

I believe the Ten Commandments SHOULD be displayed in classrooms. The TEKS require that we teach character traits and this is how we used to do it. Using a timeless method revered by most. We are, in fact, a Judeo Christian Nation. If a student does not believe in Christianity, they can still use the remainder of the Commandments as guides for knowing the difference between right and wrong.

I believe that if we can fix the hearts of our children, the other problems that our current young people have, will correct themselves. Our children do not seem to have a guiding light, purpose or direction. The Ten Commandments are principles that would guide them in a positive direction.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I am FOR the bill.

Sweety Deshpande
Self and software engineer.
Round Rock, TX

Not every child attending public school is Christian by religion . If people need kids to learn in religious environments they can send them to Christian school. Public school needs to be non religious and available to general public. There are some areas in Texas that are more than 50% non Christian, even if individually it may not be as much as Christianity. Please let public schools be what they are supposed to be : place where all kids regardless of religious beliefs come together to learn, collaborate and become responsible civic adults.

Jing Yang
Self
Sugar Land, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law. The Ten Commandments have been an important part of American legal and cultural tradition since the founding of the nation. The Supreme Court of the United States has recognized the historical and cultural significance of the Ten Commandments, and they have been displayed in various government buildings and public spaces throughout the country for centuries. I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Vinod Shurpali
Self
Cedar Park, TX

I vote NO

Madhavi Jagtap
Self
Round Rock, TX

In the context of a public school, it is the responsibility of the school district and its teachers to maintain neutrality between religions and between religion and nonreligion. Displays of religious text and iconography in classrooms create divisiveness, not tolerance. Public schools in the US are secular and need to be secular.

Parag Teredesai
Self/Parent
Austin, TX

Can we ensure that good teachings from all other religions get equal display space?

Francesca Romans
Sel
Leander, TX

I write to submit my opposition to SB 1515. Public schools educate children of all religions, faiths, and spiritualities. To require the display of the 10 Commandments is to force Christian doctrine on all students, including those who are not Christian. Will our teachers be allowed to display the tenets of other world religions? How does this make ALL students feel comfortable or welcome in their classrooms? It, of course, does not. It implies that the student is in the wrong if they are not Christian. As a parent and a Christian myself, this is deeply disturbing and the opposite of what public education should be. What about our teachers? How comfortable are they going to be when they are forced to put a 16x20 photo from a religion they might not practice? How comfortable are they going to be answering questions about religion when their students inevitably ask them?

Please do not force religion on our schools. Private religious schools exist for those who wish to take that route. To force religion on public school students is a violation of the separation of church and state. It is also a violation of the parental rights of those who do not wish for their children to be taught religion in public schools. I respectfully ask that our representatives vote no on this bill. Thank you.

Shubhada Palsule
Self
Round Rock, TX

Vote NO

Rachel Cabana
The Satanic Temple
San Antonio, TX

As a tax paying citizen, I vehemently oppose this action. Public schools are not intended to indoctrinate students into a specific religious belief. That belongs to their respective parents and clergy.

Xiongzheng Zhong
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Shelly Lundberg, School Librarian
Self
Spring, TX

I am a non-religious person. I have students who are non--religious as well as students who follow religions besides Christianity. The ten commandments have no place in a public school. They belong in a church for those who follow that religion. Please keep all religion out of public schools. In case it needs explanation...Separation of church and state is the idea that government should remain neutral toward all religions and not officially recognize or favor any one religion.

Holly Don
Self
Katy, TX

I support the Ten Commandments to all schools!

Huimin Xing
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.
Thank you.

Gaoming Li
Self
Katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commandments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

D.S. Zamora, Mrs.

Self

Houston, TX

I ****OPPOSE**** SB 1515.

(1) I agree with John Litzler, the general counsel for the Baptist General Convention of Texas. If the Ten Commandments are posted in any classroom below 4th grade, that will trigger certain questions for the instructor. The instructor may not be legally able to answer the questions by the time the 88th reaches sine die. As Litzler mentioned, some of the parents would prefer to delay the questions about adultery till a more appropriate developmental stage.

(2) That appears to be the King James text. It's a terrible idea to place that in bilingual classrooms and classrooms with students slowly learning to speak modern English.

To write a proper essay about which translation should be used would require more space than provided.

(3) Could we at least agree on a translation that uses more modern English?

(4) Why are the bill author and bill sponsor so utterly clueless about the diverse range of religions practiced in this state? Christianity is not the only one, plus there's a wide diversity within Christianity. Judaism is ****not**** the only other major religion.

(5) It is not proper for the state of Texas and its institutions to practice religion or educate students in such practices other than for purely informational purposes.

(6) "Love thy neighbor" nor "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" are included in these commandments.

(7) Absolute agreement between sects and religions on what comprises the Ten Commandments does not exist.

(8) The funds of the state of Texas are not a resource for "test SCOTUS cases." Nor is the attorney general's office.

(9) The threats that teachers will quit if this takes effect are serious. The pandemic illustrated a number of viable alternative arrangements and careers that don't involve teaching in a public school. We already have a shortage, thanks.

(10) Are instructors prepared to explain that some acts not considered adultery by the Israelites at the time of the introduction of these commandments are definitely considered adultery in a Texas divorce court in 2023? ??

Bipin Birari

Self

Pflugerville, TX

The schools should be kept separate from political and religious messaging. There are other well established means for those activities. Let's keep the children focused on learning.

Prashant Gadgil

Self

Austin, TX

I oppose this bill fully. Lets not mix school and religion.

Meagan Baker, Mrs.

Self

Mckinney, TX

Please keep God in our schools. We need him now more than ever. The Ten Commandments are positive guidelines that will benefit all.

Shaojun Miao

self

katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Yan Wang

self

katy, TX

I strongly support SB1515 because this bill can help to restore religious liberty to our students and display of Ten Commitments can remind our students the importance of this fundamental foundation of American and Texas law.

I urge the committee to pass SB1515 to set up our next generation for success by knowing more of American fundamentals knowledge.

Thank you.

Geraldine Fox

Self

Tomball, TX

Public schools should not display religious beliefs or principles. It is up to parents to choose and educate their child on their religious beliefs outside of a school setting if they wish to. Teachers should not have to explain the 10 commandments to their students.

Asmita Shinde

Self

liberty hill, TX

Disagree.

Nancy Friedman
self/retired
Houston, TX

Posting the Ten Commandments in public schools is unconstitutional, divisive, and harmful to religion. The US Supreme Court held more than 40 years ago in the case *Stone v. Graham* that displaying the Ten Commandments in a public school is unconstitutional. The Ten Commandments are a sacred religious text in the Jewish and Christian faiths. Displaying them endorses a specific religious perspective. SB1515, in fact, mandates specific wording for the display, meaning that the state decides which of the different versions is the "official" version. Clearly, this is impermissible under both the US and the Texas constitutions.

Displaying them sends a message to students who do not hold the same religious beliefs as the majority that they are outsiders and not full members of the community. Everyone should feel welcome in their public school, whether they believe in God or follow the Ten Commandments or not. Diversity and learning to interact with and respect others from different backgrounds and beliefs is one of the hallmarks of public schools. Mandating this text to be posted in every classroom would disrespect and violate the religious freedom of those who practice other religions or no religion or even who share the majority belief but follow different text.

This bill would also violate the rights of parents to guide their children's religious upbringing, allowing the state to interfere with and even prevail over parents' rights. This would be the case not only for parents whose faith either doesn't follow or follows a different version of the Ten Commandments. This bill would also disregard the rights of parents who agree with Gov. Abbott that public schools are for education, not indoctrination, and that religion belongs in one's house of worship.

The amount of attention this bill has drawn from across the nation shows how divisive and harmful it is likely to be, not to mention the subject of litigation. Please devote state resources to educating children and keeping them safe and reject this bill.

Hearing Date: May 2, 2023 8:00 AM

Susan Martin

Self

Houston, TX

This bill serves as no more than mass indoctrination and opens the door for gross variance in interpretation which will in many circumstances certainly present inconsistencies with student and their family chosen faith. Given the mass variance of interpretation among Christianity, teachers (even those of Christian faith) are not theologians and are not equipped to respond to children's inquiries regarding the Ten Commandments consistent with each child's chosen Faith interpretation. This bill also opens Texas up to unnecessary litigation and a waste of tax money defending this bill. Posting of these commandments in every classroom is clear discrimination to the exclusion of children, teachers and families of faith other than Christianity. Public schools are not to discriminate and are in service to all public, including all interpretations of Christian faith and other faiths.

Faith formation is the responsibility of churches and families. Our country is founded in a strong history of separation of church and state. Any indication that placing the Ten Commandments in Texas public schools is based in history, is grossly overstated and ignoring historical context in which communities of same faith often formed singular public communities. Our world, state, and communities have integrated. Our public now serves multi faiths, cultures, status, etc. Our public services, especially education, must grow to serve all in these public communities.

Our children attended a Christian based preschool. We are proud of the faith foundation they received. However, as they have entered public elementary school, we are more proud of the days they come out excitedly sharing what they've learned about a new friends faith and traditions. They express curiosity, critical thinking, and compassion. They often want to delve further into our own faith and explore differences and similarities to their friends. These experiences are what we are confident will help them have humility, and care for others as our world grows. Forcing all to follow a single faith tradition or expressing one as better than is divisive, harmful, and holds no place in our public education system.

Cheryl Foster

Self / retired

Waco, TX

Absolutely insulting and ridiculous. We're not all Christians and this bill is a slap in the face to those of us who are not. Please stop pushing your religion down our throats

Rachel S
self
Austin, TX

I am writing in vehement opposition to SB 1515. The Establishment Clause of the 1st Amendment very clearly prohibits the establishment of and favoritism toward any one religion, yet our country, ostensibly founded on the principals of freedom and religious liberty, is rapidly heading toward a theocratic tyranny. By mandating that schools display the doctrines and mandates of one single religion, christianity, this legislature is in essence spitting on our Constitution. Religious groups of any kind should not be in a position to legislate their religious beliefs such that people not beholden to their religion will be affected by it. It doesn't matter what the bible says because the bible has no place in our government, our laws, and our classrooms based on our Constitution.

How does this help literally anyone in Texas? Does this address the housing and homelessness crisis and how this is being fueled by private equity buying residential real estate? Does this help safeguard our children from being shot and murdered in our schools with weapons of war? Will the lack of access to affordable healthcare and prescription medications be solved? Does this address the stagnation of wages, rise of inflation, and how more and more people are working multiple jobs simply to get by? Does this law in any way, shape, or form materially benefit a single citizen and help improve our quality of life? Of course not. This is just more culture war fodder that you can take back to the most extreme fringe in your districts to distract them from the fact that you are doing NOTHING to help improve the daily lives of the people whose best interests you were elected to represent and to hide the fact that each every one of you is bought and sold by your corporate donors whom you serve above all else. This bill is a sham and an embarrassment.

I'm certain that my words will fall on deaf ears as our republican representatives have made it abundantly clear that they do not care about the voices of their constituents, but I also cannot sit back, do nothing, and watch as our state and country blithely waltz toward a rather bleak future.

Ellen Yancey
Self
Dallas, TX

Please do not pass this bill. It will offend many students, and their families, and is polarizing. We do not need anything else that divides people. If this is passed, then all religions should be represented. It seems as if, whoever King is, has an agenda to force Christianity on people. That violates the separation of church and state. Just leave things alone and quit getting into personal self interest. Be gracious and accepting....leave your personal interest out of our homes and schools.

Carmen Casamayor-Ryan
Self
Houston, TX

This bill would unnecessarily alienate students and teachers who are not Christian. Christianity has no place in public classrooms. Parents who wish for their children to govern their lives by these tenets should teach their children themselves or send them to the appropriate faith-based school.

Christina Etri
Self
DALLAS, TX

Chairman Buckley and Committee Members,

I am a parent of two public school students and a former educator. I strongly oppose this bill because it is a clear violation of church and state. In *Lemmon (1971)*, the Supreme Court stated that the country shall remain neutral and the government shall neither advance nor inhibit religion, and it must not foster "an excessive government entanglement with religion." Requiring public schools that serve children of all different types of religious backgrounds crosses the line of government entanglement and is not neutral. Not all who attend public school are Christian. In fact, the school where I formally taught is primarily Muslim.

Imagine, if you will, that you were the minority religion. How would it make you feel to see this every day or be forced to read it in a place where you expected to learn? Imagine that you are a child whose family believes differently. Everyone is free to believe and practice their religion as they see fit but you are not free to impose your religious beliefs on others. Especially in a public school supported by the tax dollars of all citizens in this state.

SB 1515 is wrong and should not even make it out of committee. It is a violation of church and state. It is entanglement of the government and not neutral. I urge the committee to vote it down.

Thank you.

Marsha Schoenkopf, Mrs.
Self artist
Dallas, TX

Displaying the commandments of any religion in public schools is wrong on so many levels. Subjecting and forcing children to one ideology that may oppose their family's beliefs is harmful.

Stacy Branam
self, healthcare IT
Justin, TX

Please DO NOT pass this unconstitutional attempt to force Christian doctrine on captive students, many of which are of different faiths, or none at all - freedom of religion! "Congress shall make NO law respecting an establishment of religion..." Public schools, funded by all taxpayers, should not be used to indoctrinate children into any one ideology. Religious freedom is critical to the health of a diverse society, and protects the rights of all individuals, whether religious or not. Schools can teach strong personal/moral values of being kind and respectful to one another and abiding by laws (of criminality) because it's just the right thing to do as humans, without the use of religious materials to justify the reason. Currently in my school district, students have always been free to voluntarily organize on their own, on school grounds if they choose for fellowship and prayer. No one is forced to attend or witness, and no one is preventing the free exercise of participants. This bill is undermining the secular nature of public education and the religious freedoms of ALL students. It's only serving the extreme political movements to cause further division amongst the people. If passed, this bill will be heavily litigated, wasting an enormous amount of taxpayer dollars by the state. Leave well enough alone and keep forced religion out of our classrooms!

I kindly, but strongly urge the TX House & Public Education committee vote NAY/AGAINST this bill.

Thank you

Gloria Thomas
Myself, a United Methodist Christian
Denton, TX

I oppose this based on the separation of church and state and respect for the full range of religious beliefs or lack of religious belief among our school population.

William McWhorter

Self

Longview, TX

I respectfully urge favorable passage of this important bill. We must do everything in our power to make sure God has a felt and visible presence in our classrooms and schools. This won't change issues over night but it will certainly be an important and helpful step on that righteous path. Thank you very much for your work and consideration.

Fred Hubbard

Self

Trophy Club, TX

Terrible idea and should not happen. Constitution demands separation of church and state.

Donna Lipman

self

Austin, TX

Senate Bill 1515, authored by state Sen. Phil King, a Republican, requires the Ten Commandments to be displayed in a "conspicuous place" in each classroom in a "size and typeface that is legible to a person with average vision from anywhere in the classroom" is an OUTRAGE. How dare Mr. King push his religious beliefs on the children of this state (or any state) is disgraceful and disrespectful to others who may have other beliefs. Mr. King says that the 10 commandments are a part of our American heritage - but just a PART and not for all!! Isn't that what this country was founded on - the ability to practice whatever religion you wished? What about all the other people who live in this state? I BELIEVE YOU DO NOT CARE. Mr. Patrick is WRONG that this is a win for religious freedom - it's suppression and a huge loss of freedoms. DO NOT use my taxpayer dollars to expose our children to something that parents, not schools, should be doing. (Actually, how do you explain adultery to a kindergartner??) In fact, every step of the way during this legislative session and in previous sessions, you work hard to take away our rights. There is NO FREEDOM in our children (or anyone) dying from gun violence, no freedom in gerrymandering and taking away our rights and abilities to vote, no freedom in taking away a woman's right to health care that should be between her and her doctor, no freedom in banning books (shades of Nazis), no freedom in making laws against vulnerable LGBTQIA+, drag shows. and trans people. Yet, after 8 years, Ken Paxton, still has not gone to trial for his FELONY crimes. What is wrong with you people? Oh, and what about your dismal record on the environment? Clearly you care about oil, not the children like those you are forcing to be born in this state, to live in a place where it is getting hotter, drier with less and less water. You are cruel hypocrites. SHAME ON YOU! I would like an answer.

Susan Harris

Parent of Tx school children

Dallas, TX

This is a violation of separation of church and state. School children come from all faiths and forcing one religion on them is not right. Please reconsider and focus on important issues like school shootings.

Katherine Raney

Self. Program Specialist.

Bastrop, TX

I disagree with this bill and ask the House to not pass it. Religion, in practice, is something parents and community leaders teach their children—not teachers and public schools. Please allow students and teachers to learn and teach without religious posters in a public school setting. Or, require similar posters of ALL major world religions be displayed. We need not single out Christianity as the only teachings to display. In addition, while the 10 Commandments' message is mostly moral teachings that we can all agree on, I think the word "adultery," or the idea of a man coveting another's wife, do not have a place in most classrooms. Thank you.

Ann Villasana
Self. Self employed
Dallas, TX

This is a direct violation of the separation of church and state and I oppose it.

Elaine Glasscock
Self
Dallas, TX

I am highly opposed to displaying the Ten Commandments in public schools. This would violate the separation of church and state. As a Christian, and a parent of school age children, I feel that this attempts to remove my rights as a parent to educate and raise my children regarding our faith. I am in charge of teaching my children about the Ten Commandments and I don't need your help. Please allow parents to be in charge of religious instruction, not the state.

Lesley Guilmart
Self
Cypress, TX

I am vehemently opposed to HB 1515. Posting the 10 Commandments in public schools and their classrooms is the opposite of religious liberty. We have millions of families in TX who are not Christians and who will feel excluded by this. This is theocracy. This is fascism.

This is hypocrisy. The extremist pearl clutches who would ban books that acknowledge human sexuality are fine with the smallest of children seeing references to adultery on their classroom walls? What should teachers say it means when they're inevitably asked?

Can educators also post the 5 Pillars of Islam? The wisdom of the Tao te Ching? The Torah? Confucianism? The Church of Satan? Secular Humanism? If not, then this is not religious liberty. Leave religious instruction to families and places of worship.

We already have a daily moment of silence when students and staff can pray (or not). Schools already have to display those "In God We Trust" signs when extremists donate them. Enough is enough.

Nathan Bicketstaff, Mr
Representative Conservati
Midlothian, TX

SB15-Middleton the bill Banning Men from Women's Sports.
Keep man out of women sports

Put the 10 commandments back in schools and education

Joel Flores, Mr
Self
Sebastian, TX

Yes kids need to know about God in school if their parents aren't raising them with the knowledge of our God almighty the ten commandments should be in the displayed it's up for debate

Joshua Rastetter
Never Again Coalition
SAN ANGELO, TX

The separation of church and state is enshrined in the 1st amendment for a reason. I am extremely troubled with the thought of a religious dogma being overrepresented in my child's school. Would I be permitted to display stanzas of the Havamal at school? I'm assuming no, which would make this a Christian nationalist bill and unconstitutional!

Jake Wilson
Self - CPA
Fort Worth, TX

I write in strong support of HB1515 to place the Ten Commandments in school classrooms.

The United States has a problem with an increase in gun violence and other types of violence. In response to this trend, it can't hurt to have a poster in every classroom that reminds students that the Creator of the world they live in said "You shall not murder."

(I do hope the legislature will consider amending the bill to say "you shall not murder" rather than "kill", since "murder" is used in many recent Bible translations and does not include self-defense (see Exodus 22:2-3) or war).

The United States has a problem with an increase in adultery, pornography, and divorce. In response to these trends, it can't hurt to have a poster in every classroom that reminds students that the Creator of the world they live in said "Thou shalt not commit adultery" and "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife...nor anything that is thy neighbor's."

The United States has a problem with an increase in lies and misinformation spread through social media and other means. In response to this trend, it can't hurt to have a poster in every classroom that reminds students that the Creator of the world they live in said "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

I don't pretend to claim that simply placing a Ten Commandments poster in every classroom is going to solve all our problems. Students would still have to make their own decision on whether to follow God and His commandments or not. But more exposure to the Ten Commandments is a small measure that does something meaningful to address the social problems we face in 21st Century American society and culture.

Placing a Ten Commandments poster in a classroom does not force anyone to observe a specific religion or compel/coerce anyone who lacks religious belief to practice according to someone else's faith. Students and parents who disagree with parts of the Ten Commandments would still have the freedom to disagree and voice their disagreement. But viewing a message of morality on a wall, in and of itself, does not compel or coerce someone into agreeing with that message.

I respect that Church and State are two separate institutions, each given specific roles by God, Who created all of this world, which includes both Church and State. Separation of Church and State, as different institutions with different responsibilities, does not mean separation of God and State. All of us live in a world God created. It is appropriate to acknowledge Him.

Please pass SB1515.

Thank You.

Jake Wilson
Self - CPA
Fort Worth, TX

Please pass SB1515.

Here is the ESV version of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1-17:

“And God spoke all these words, saying,

2 “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 “You shall have no other gods before me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

13 “You shall not murder.

14 “You shall not commit adultery.

15 “You shall not steal.

16 “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.””

Mindi Albert
Retired public school educator.
Dallas, TX

This is a direct violation of the separation of church and state intended by our forefathers. This ideological overreach has no business in public schools.

Sharon Gillespie, ms
self, retired educator
Austin, TX

I had thought that, in the journey of Texas into the future, we Texans would have learned something about history. This great country was founded on the principle of separation of church and state. That does not mean the separation of church and state except for Christians and the Bible. State-endorsed religion is anathema to the founding principles of our country. What is the endorsement of Christianity today in the future could be the endorsement of the Muslim religion or the Jewish or the Hindu. You who vote for this bill will not always be a bulwark to hold back whatever tide is coming. The best we can do now is to foster a doctrine of fairness by supporting the separation of church and state. To continue in this vein may be the saving grace for all of us. Vote no on this bill!

Lee Roscoe, Mr.
Self; retired Senior and 80% disabled Vietnam veteran
Schertz, TX

The 10 Commandments are the basis of our entire legal system. They are a necessity for a civilized America. They are upheld in our court system daily. Posting them has never harmed anyone unless a crime is committed violating them. Yes, they need to be posted! Please pass this bill as doing so never will violate the fictitious "separation of church & state" which is NOT in the Constitution!

Donna Garner
Self
Waco, TX

Our country and our whole judicial system is based upon the Judeo Christian ethic. Our students need to be taught this.

Jake Wilson
Self - CPA
Fort Worth, TX

I support SB1515. Thank you to Senator King for carrying it.

I wrote a comment previously to suggest that SB1515 be amended to use the English Standard Version translation instead of the King James Version. Another option would be the New King James Version - if the legislature were inclined to be somewhat traditional, but also help the Ten Commandments to be more understandable to students than the current King James Version wording in the bill. I think either the English Standard Version or the New King James Version would be good alternatives. Those versions are more easily understood to 21st Century readers.

Here are the Ten Commandments, from Exodus 20:1-17, in the New King James Version:

"And God spoke all these words, saying:

2 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

7 "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.""

Justin Thompson
Self
Denton, TX

This is a clear violation of separation of church and state. I urge you all to vote against this. As someone who experienced severe trauma in the church. I can testify, that doing this will likely cause children, whom also have been victims of abuse in a church setting, to have flashbacks, not feel safe at school, worsening mental health issues. When you do everything you can to escape the one place that your under constant threat, and then also have to see reminders of that place when you go to school, every day of the week. That's absolute mental torture on someone. When your voting on this today, I want you to think about the many different children in Texas. Acknowledge the good, the bad, the sad, but that they all have different experiences. And know that your vote today, could actually cause more harm to the mental health of those who have been victimized.

Valerie Barron

Self, education consultant

Austin, TX

I oppose this bill. Requiring a display of the Ten Commandments imposes particular religious views on all children and adults in a school, infringing on their religious freedom. In addition, the proposed language is not appropriate for all ages, referencing ideas that young children should not have to read about in a classroom.

Kathleen White

Self - teacher

Houston, TX

Requiring the display of a religious document in public schools is an egregious violation of the separation of church and state that has been well-defined by our highest courts. Public schools may not endorse any religion so it follows that they may not be required to display any religion's sacred texts.

Mina OConnell, Mrs.

Self

Boerne, TX

Yes our nation was founded upon biblical principles, and our forefathers and society at large valued and taught the Ten Commandments. Our children need loving, wise structure and supervision more than ever at this chaotic, violent, depressing time in America's history. I agree with posting the Ten Commandments in every public school in a prominent place and for this to be shown appropriate respect as per our nations flag or any other historic foundation of America's bedrock. Thank you.

Jennifer Bates

Self

Denton, TX

I am clergy candidate working to become a pastor, and I oppose this bill. I have spent the last five years of my life studying Christianity. It is not the job of the school or the state to promote a religion. The Ten Commandments are important to Christians, but we should not be forcing them to be displayed in any public space.

Brandon Burden, Pastor

North Texas Conservatives

Melissa, TX

I am in favor of posting the Ten Commandments in Public Schools across Texas. This spiritual guidance will help shape kids' moral behavior and ethics. Kids need moral absolutes in order to discern right from wrong. In the current culture of moral relativity, each kid does what is right in their own eyes. This leads to confusion, insecurity, and instability in our children. We need to shore up their belief system with this display of timeless truth that has guided the world for centuries. Vote YES to SB 1515!

Solange Hommel

self, retired

Killeen, TX

While there are a great number of bills this session that appear to be nothing more than grandstanding and political campaigning, this is the most egregious.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

With these words, every American is guaranteed the right to practice their individual religious beliefs, free from persecution by the government. Public schools, as a government funded resource, are prohibited from establishing one religion above the others.

In allowing public school classrooms to display the Ten Commandments, Texas would be violating the religious freedoms of all those who do not follow religions driven by those commandments, UNLESS public schools were also allowed to display the rules and commandments of ALL OTHER RELIGIONS equally.

Which Christian denomination gets to determine the order of the commandments? Are the authors of this bill advocating that public schools should display all 613 Jewish Mitzvot? Will classrooms be allowed to post the 5 Pillars of Islam? How about the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism? Or the 9 Satanic Commandments?

This bill, if passed, cannot possibly stand up to the inevitable lawsuits that will be filed. This bill is a waste of taxpayer money. It is nothing but extreme right Republicans pandering to their conservative bases ahead of a presidential election year.

Reed Bilz, Ms

Self

Fort Worth, TX

SB 1515 would require Texas public schools to display the Ten Commandments in every classroom starting next school year. This bill violates the religious freedom of the diverse array of faiths and non-faiths in Texas by stating that a copy of these Judeo-Christian principles must be "legible to a person with average vision from anywhere in the classroom." I urge you OPPOSE this discriminatory legislation.

Larry Phillips

NTX Conservatives

Whitney, TX

I support returning and displaying the TEN COMMANDMENTS to schools and school classrooms of Texas.

Taylor Trevino

self

Austin, TX

As an educator, I strongly urge legislators to OPPOSE this bill. The Ten Commandments have no place in public schools. To be clear, the religious teachings of any group have no place in public schools. Would lawmakers be okay with sections of the Quran or the Torah being posted in schools as a moral and ethical baseline? Absolutely not. Our first amendment rights to the freedom of religion dictate that public school not be a place where religion is taught - if parents wish for their children to have that type of exposure, they can do that at home or send their children to a private school. Our children should not be faced with Christian indoctrination when they come to school. There are ways to teach what's right and wrong without using Christianity as the source of those ethics, as has been done for centuries. Religion aside, the content and language of the Ten Commandments are completely inappropriate for many grade levels. I ask lawmakers if they're prepared to tell a 5 year old what committing adultery is, or if they're ready to tell Texas teachers who are already overburdened, to now explain each of the commandments when a child asks (because they will) instead of using class time to teach the curriculum.

Our Constitution clearly states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion" and SB 1515 is in complete defiance of this clause. I urge all legislators to vote NO on this unconstitutional bill.

Ruth Potts
N Tx Conservatives
Fort Worth, TX

I agree with this bill we are One Nation Under God and He is the only one that will be able to cause the children and this Nation to thrive. These 10 commandments are a strong moral compass. Our Nation and the children of our Nation need this guidance ever before us.

George Guajardo, Development Officer
Self, Development Officer
Blanco, TX

The term, "separation between Church and state" is not in the Constitution, and was written by Jefferson to describe a wall protecting churches from government overreach.

Therefore, we have misinterpreted this line in history and should allow for the free expression of religion in the schoolhouse, as described in the SCOTUS ruling on Tinker: "the faith of the student or faculty member does not stop at the school house gates"

Diana Young
Self, NTX Conservatives, christians
Ravenna, TX

We must get back to our foundation on which the republic of America was formed by our founding fathers. Our children NEED to know these commandments given to all created by OUR GOD. please help us get this passed !

Carolyn Dower
self, retired nurse
Austin, TX

Please oppose SB 1515.

This is clearly a violation of separation of church and state, and not freedom of religion. Texas has a diverse population of religious beliefs and cultures in our schools. Quoting the Austin American Statesman, which I completely agree with: "Tipping the scales toward Christianity in public schools would impose a one-size-fits-all theology that erodes these protections. If you really want to protect religious freedoms, state legislators should flatly reject these bills."

OPPOSE SB 1515.

Jordan Hennington
Self
Mansfield, TX

Vote against the placement of the 10 Commandments in schools

Mindi Penrod
self
Houston, TX

I oppose this bill. While I can agree having some spiritual guidance in our lives is great, kids need a good example set for them, my question is WHO'S GOD are we using as the example? This bill erases the line of separation of church and state, and sets a precedent for one specific religion being selected. We are a nation of multiple religions, NOT JUST ONE. This bill screams of Christian Nationalism, which was not our founding. I really don't need a list of commandments in my kid's classroom to teach them how to be a good human being, I can do that all on my own. Having these signs in every classroom means you will also have to explain sex to kindergarteners (Thou shalt not cover they neighbors wife). You, as witnessed in other bills in this session, really don't like the idea of presenting facts about sex education to children so young, but THIS is okay?! That is not acceptable to me! This, as with many other bills, takes away my parental rights on when to present said information to my own child. You're making that choice FOR ME, where's MY CHOICE?

This also negates the choices of communities in our school systems who are not of the Christian faith. That falls back on my statement of not being a one religion country. This alienates other religious leaders and communities. You're stating they are not welcome with this bill. I don't appreciate that and I don't appreciate you making choices for other religious leaders.

Do not vote yes on this bill, this is a bad bill and should have never been presented.

Shauna Roffman
North Texas conservatives
Keller, TX

I am supporting SB 1515 I want to see it pass! Thank you

Jodie Tefer
Self
Georgetown, TX

Keep religion at home and out of school and government.

Betty Daugherty
Self
The Woodlands, TX

Please vote NO on this bill . This is a violation of parent's rights and separation of church and state.

Lizdelia Pinon
Self- Education Researcher
Crowley, TX

As a mother of 4 children in Texas public schools, I am AGAINST HB 1515 due to concerns with freedom of religious conscience and separation of state and church. This bill is unconstitutional and violates the Establishment Clause in the First Amendment, which prohibits the state from establishing a religion.

Lori Adamczyk
Self
Spring, TX

This is indoctrination of students and overstepping the separation of church and state. Respect the rights of parents to educate their children according to their own religious beliefs. Reject this bill and stand up for student and parents rights.

Carol Ortiz
self/retired
Montgomery, TX

OPPOSE SB 1515.

Public schools should not infringe on parental rights by indoctrinating students in any specific faith tradition, including the 10 Commandments. Displaying the 10 Commandments in every classroom in the state is a violation of the Constitutional separation between church and state. "The U.S. Constitution expressly prohibits the entanglement of church and state, and the Texas Constitution guarantees the freedom of worship," David Donatti, an attorney with the ACLU of Texas explained. Whether we celebrate Ramadan, Easter, Passover or nothing at all, people of all faiths and creeds, should oppose the State's endorsement of one particular religion."

Terris Goodwin
Self- RN
Temple, TX

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."
With these words, every American is guaranteed the right to practice their individual religious beliefs, free from persecution by the government. Public schools, as a government funded resource, are prohibited from establishing one religion above the others.

In allowing public school classrooms to display the Ten Commandments, Texas would be violating the religious freedoms of all those who do not follow religions driven by those commandments, UNLESS public schools were also allowed to display the rules and commandments of ALL OTHER RELIGIONS equally.

Which Christian denomination gets to determine the order of the commandments? Are the authors of this bill advocating that public schools should display all 613 Jewish Mitzvot? Will classrooms be allowed to post the 5 Pillars of Islam? How about the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism? Or the 9 Satanic Commandments?

This bill, if passed, cannot possibly stand up to the inevitable lawsuits that will be filed. This bill is a waste of taxpayer money. Please do not pass this bill and vote "No"

Amanda Sudaz

Self

Temple, TX

While there are a great number of bills this session that appear to be nothing more than grandstanding and political campaigning, this is the most egregious.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

With these words, every American is guaranteed the right to practice their individual religious beliefs, free from persecution by the government. Public schools, as a government funded resource, are prohibited from establishing one religion above the others.

In allowing public school classrooms to display the Ten Commandments, Texas would be violating the religious freedoms of all those who do not follow religions driven by those commandments, UNLESS public schools were also allowed to display the rules and commandments of ALL OTHER RELIGIONS equally.

Which Christian denomination gets to determine the order of the commandments? Are the authors of this bill advocating that public schools should display all 613 Jewish Mitzvot? Will classrooms be allowed to post the 5 Pillars of Islam? How about the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism? Or the 9 Satanic Commandments?

This bill, if passed, cannot possibly stand up to the inevitable lawsuits that will be filed. This bill is a waste of taxpayer money. It is nothing but extreme right Republicans pandering to their conservative bases ahead of a presidential election year.

The fact that I even have to address this is ridiculous. My child learns about religion at church, not his school and I respect that not every person is Christian and therefore the 10 Commandments are irrelevant to them. This country was built on religious freedoms and values separation of church and state. We must continue to honor those values to preserve the sovereignty of our nation, which is ultimately the people.

L Quentin Dixon

Self/concerned citizen

Spring, TX

Vote NO on SB1515. Religion should be the domain of religious institutions and parents. A public school should not be required to display any text of any particular religion, no matter how universal we may think the contents of that particular piece of text is. Only parents have the right to bring up their children in the religion of their choice, and to introduce their children to its tenets in their own time and manner. I believe this violates the "establishment" clause of the U.S. constitution, as it essentially is the state endorsing a particular religion and forcing its tenets on all public school children. Also, some of the commandments are inappropriate for young children. What are teachers supposed to say when their kindergarten students asks "what's adultery?" Again, parents should be in charge of instructing their children on these matters.

Retain parental rights and separate of church and state by voting NO on SB 1515.

Lisa Gertsch

self and all common sense people everywhere

Houston, TX

This is absolutely unbelievable. Separation of Church and State is THEE most basic concept of the US government. How many steps backwards can Texas take? I can't even believe this is a thing! Absolutely I endorse making it NOT okay to display any one religion's teaching at any school.

Jennifer Conner

self

The Woodlands, TX

OPPOSE SB 1515. We are a nation that specifically separates church and the state. That is part of our American constitution. Public schools should not infringe on parental rights by indoctrinating students in any specific faith tradition, including the 10 Commandments. This is a ridiculous bill. This bill has no place in public schools. If I wanted my children to have a religious education, I would send them to parochial school.

This bill should never have gotten to committee, it's quite literally UNCONSTITUTIONAL!!!

Rishi Bhutada

Hindu American Foundation

Sugar Land, TX

The Hindu American Foundation (HAF) is opposing SB 1515, which mandates the display of the Ten Commandments in public K-12 classrooms. This type of mandate expressly privileges the Judeo-Christian religious tradition over other religions, a direct violation of the First Amendment guarantee against the establishment of any religion. It also infringes on the religious freedom of students who believe in other religious traditions such as Hinduism, as they are being faced with a direct governmental endorsement of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The religious precepts that would be on display vary significantly from non-Judeo-Christian concepts regarding the nature of God and the relationship between man and God. As a result, public display of the Ten Commandments in school classrooms would imply the social exclusion of non-Judeo-Christian religions, including Hinduism. Hindu students, along with students who believe in other non-Judeo-Christian religions or no religion at all, would in effect be told that they are not welcome in their classrooms and schools, which is antithetical to the purpose of those classrooms and schools. Given the special vulnerability of students and power dynamics with the school, administration, and teachers, these excluded students would be unlikely to express anything about their own faith in any classroom discussion, and thus would be denied their religious liberty. HAF urges the members of this committee to vote down this bill and keep Texas schools welcome to students of all faiths.

Peggy Roscoe

Self

Conroe, TX

I oppose SB 1515. I am against the display of the Ten Commandments in the Texas schools. It violates the separation of church and state. Many students in the Texas school districts are not Christian. There are children whose religion is Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, or they may be agnostics or atheists. I am not opposed to them being displayed in a Catholic or a Christian school, but they should not be on display in a public school.

Wilner Jeudy, Dr.
American Atheists
Houston, TX

Dear Chairperson Buckley & members of the Public Education Committee:

As a Texas Resident, American Atheists' Texas State Director, and on behalf of its over 3,400 constituents in Texas, I write in opposition to SB 1515. SB 1515 seeks to authorize and require "Ten Commandments" displays to be posted in schools and classrooms. "Ten Commandments", refers to a set of biblical principles relating to ethics and worship that play a fundamental role in two religions: Judaism and Christianity. This bill is exclusionary and divisive, and most importantly, it represents a direct attack on the religious freedom of Texas students. We strongly urge you to reject this unconstitutional measure.

Authorizing and requiring placement of this religious text into public school classrooms undermines students' constitutionally protected freedom of religion. The U.S. Constitution does not allow Texas' taxpayer funded schools to legally post Ten Commandments displays in classrooms unless there is an educational reason for doing so. Lacking such an educational context, these displays violate the Establishment Clause, which states that "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion." The U.S. Supreme Court has clarified that laws authorizing such displays have "no secular legislative purpose" and so they are not allowable in public schools.

SB 1515 is no different. The bill does nothing to ensure that these displays are intended to fulfill appropriate secular purposes. In fact, the bill promotes violations of the First Amendment, and the religious freedom of students by requiring schools to post these in a conspicuous place and accept any donation of the "Ten Commandments".

Further, these displays are religiously coercive in that they promote certain religious perspectives with apparent state approval. Asserting a particular set of religious beliefs in classrooms this way is exclusionary and unfair. Students and teachers have a variety of beliefs -- Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and atheist, to name a just a few. SB 1515 will set the stage for bullying and harassment against students with differing beliefs.

This bill is especially exclusionary toward the growing number of Texans that do not identify with any religion. Currently, about 23% of adults in the US are religiously unaffiliated, and atheists and agnostics make up about 7% of the total population. In Texas, 18% of the population has no religious affiliation. The Texas Legislature should not marginalize this sizeable and growing population by purposefully inserting exclusionary messages into public school classrooms that are meant to serve all the people of Texas.

SB 1515 undermines religious freedom for Texas students by inserting specific religious beliefs into the classroom that serve no educational purpose. This wasteful bill will certainly result in additional liability for school districts. We strongly urge you to reject this unconstitutional legislation.