

1-1 By: Campbell S.B. No. 2986
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 14, 2025; April 7, 2025, read
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Education K-16;
1-4 April 24, 2025, reported adversely, with favorable Committee
1-5 Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 10, Nays 0; April 24, 2025,
1-6 sent to printer.)

1-7	COMMITTEE VOTE				
1-8		Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-9	Creighton	X			
1-10	Campbell	X			
1-11	Bettencourt			X	
1-12	Hagenbuch	X			
1-13	Hinojosa of Nueces	X			
1-14	King	X			
1-15	Menéndez	X			
1-16	Middleton	X			
1-17	Parker	X			
1-18	Paxton	X			
1-19	West	X			

1-20 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 2986 By: Hinojosa of Nueces

1-21 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-22 AN ACT

1-23 relating to use by a religious organization of public school or
1-24 institution of higher education facilities.

1-25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-26 SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 11, Education Code, is
1-27 amended by adding Section 11.173 to read as follows:

1-28 Sec. 11.173. USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES BY RELIGIOUS
1-29 ORGANIZATION. (a) A school district or open-enrollment charter
1-30 school may allow a religious organization to use the district's or
1-31 school's facilities to host religious worship, services, sermons,
1-32 or assemblies only if:

1-33 (1) the use of the facilities does not interfere with
1-34 the district's or school's primary educational mission;

1-35 (2) the religious organization provides the fair
1-36 market rental value or reimbursement for utilities, security, and
1-37 other costs related to the use of the facilities as determined by
1-38 the board of trustees of the district or the governing body of the
1-39 school, unless waived by the board or governing body;

1-40 (3) the religious organization agrees to be held
1-41 liable for any damages that occur in the organization's use of the
1-42 facilities; and

1-43 (4) any additional requirements imposed by other law
1-44 for the use of the facilities are satisfied.

1-45 (b) A state agency, political subdivision, school district,
1-46 or other governmental entity may not impose a penalty or sanction on
1-47 or deny funding to a school district or open-enrollment charter
1-48 school based on the district's or school's decision to allow a
1-49 religious organization to use the district's or school's facilities
1-50 in the manner provided by Subsection (a).

1-51 (c) This section may not be construed to require a school
1-52 district or open-enrollment charter school to allow a religious
1-53 organization to use the district's or school's facilities for
1-54 religious purposes if the district or school elects not to do so.

1-55 SECTION 2. Subchapter 2, Chapter 51, Education Code, is
1-56 amended by adding Section 51.984 to read as follows:

1-57 Sec. 51.984. USE OF INSTITUTION FACILITIES BY RELIGIOUS
1-58 ORGANIZATION. (a) In this section, "institution of higher
1-59 education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

1-60 (b) An institution of higher education may allow a religious

organization to use the institution's facilities to host religious worship, services, sermons, or assemblies only if:

(1) the use of the facilities does not interfere with the institution's primary educational mission;

(2) the religious organization provides the fair market rental value or reimbursement for utilities, security, and other costs related to the use of the facilities as determined by the institution or the institution's governing board, unless waived by the institution or the institution's governing board;

(3) the religious organization agrees to be held liable for any damages that occur in the organization's use of the facilities; and

(4) any additional requirements imposed by other law for the use of the facilities are satisfied.

(c) A state agency, political subdivision, or other governmental entity may not impose a penalty or sanction on or deny funding to an institution of higher education based on the institution's decision to allow a religious organization to use the institution's facilities in the manner provided by Subsection (b).

(d) This section may not be construed to require an institution of higher education to allow a religious organization to use the institution's facilities for religious purposes if the institution elects not to do so.

SECTION 3. The changes in law made by this Act do not affect the terms of a contract entered into before the effective date of this Act, except that if the contract is renewed, modified, or extended on or after the effective date of this Act, the changes in law made by this Act apply to the contract beginning on the date of renewal, modification, or extension.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

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