

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on State Affairs

For SB 11

Compiled on: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 8:03 PM

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Hearing Date: May 7, 2025 8:00 AM

Jinkuk Nahidi

Self

Austin, TX

I believe my tax payer funding should not be used for any religious activities in public schools. Please vote against this bill. I feel that I would have the right as a parent to choose to introduce my children to the religion of my choosing rather than the school exposing my kids without my permission.

Cynthia Daniels

Self

Mansfield, TX

I respectfully oppose SB 11. While reflection and moral development are important for young people, mandating a period for prayer and Bible reading in public schools crosses a constitutional line and threatens the religious freedom of all students, both those who hold faith traditions and those who do not.

Public schools should be spaces where all children, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, atheist, agnostic, and more feel equally safe, included, and respected. Government-endorsed religious activity, even when technically “voluntary,” pressures students to conform to the dominant faith tradition and risks isolating or stigmatizing others. That is not freedom of religion, it’s coercion under the guise of tradition.

The First Amendment protects both the freedom of religion and the freedom from government-imposed religion. SB 11 undermines this balance by promoting one particular expression of faith in a taxpayer-funded, government-run setting.

As a Texan who believes in religious liberty and in the value of pluralism, I urge you to oppose SB 11. Our children deserve schools that unite, not divide. Schools that teach respect for all beliefs, not elevate one above others.

Karen Goodman

Self

Austin, TX

This violates separation of church and state. The Bible (nor 10 commandments) do not belong in public schools. I am a parent of 2 Texas public school students, I do not want or agree with this. I’d rather see a break where they are allowed to read any book of their choosing or a period of breathing / meditation / stretch movement to refresh. This is totally inappropriate and I do not want my children subject to this. We choose to deal with faith religious teaching in our home and community congregation on our own personal time and teaching.

Mary Harris, Dr.

Texas Impact

Denton, TX

My name is Mary Harris. I live in Denton, have been a teacher or teacher educator at public universities in four states, and am now retired from the University of North Texas. In 1967, I completed my student teaching in Baltimore City Public Schools at the middle school where the son of Madalyn Hurray O'Hair was a student a few years earlier when she named him as plaintiff in a lawsuit that eventually contributed to the Supreme Court's 1963 decision against Bible reading in public schools. The previous year, the Supreme Court had banned organized prayer in public schools.

Having attended public school in Pennsylvania before these rulings, I experienced daily Bible reading and prayer in public school. In second grade, Mrs. Miller had us daily recite Psalm 1 before reciting The Lord's Prayer. I can still recite Psalm 1 but remember no other aspect of what 12 years of public-school prayer and Bible reading taught me. I am a strong Christian, but this is entirely due to my parents, who led family prayer every day and took us to church and Sunday School every week and Bible school in the summer.

I urge you to vote "no" on SB 11 for consideration by the Texas House of Representatives. The authors of this bill are obviously aware of current U.S. law on public school prayer and Bible reading and have developed a work-around so complicated as to consume much time of school employees in badgering parents to abrogate their right to raise children in the religion of their choice. My students in Texas have been Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu, as well as Christian, or of no faith. SB 11 may coerce parents to subject children to common prayer and Bible reading merely to avoid being different. It would require public schools and districts to spend much time organizing an activity not part of the positions for which they are trained or certified. I am sure you realize that any public-school student or employee may pray silently at any time.

Cindy Asmussen

Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Public Policy Advisor

Grapevine, TX

The Southern Baptists of Texas Convention supports SB 11 and affirms the United States Constitution protects freedom of speech, including religious

speech, evangelism and any proclamation of biblical truth; and basic and inalienable rights of people have their source in God (Genesis 1:26-27;

John 8:36) and have been recognized by our nation's laws from its founding. Nothing should prohibit individual or group prayer in public schools or other public institutions, and no person shall be required by the United States or by any state to participate in prayer. SB 11 accomplishes both and we support its passage and recognize the great need in our schools for the expression of our faith in and reliance upon God.

Mary Recio

self retired

Austin, TX

Vote no. This is in violation of the separation of church and state in our constitution. Teach the TEKS.

Kathleen Young

Self - arbitration supervisor

Cedar Park, TX

Separation of church and state. I oppose .

Sarah Wilpitz, Mrs.

self

Dallas, TX

I am strongly in favor of SB 11 which would allow a time of praying and Bible reading or other religious books. Thank you!

Emily Wilpitz

Self

Dallas, TX

Please support this bill to protect the religious freedom of students and faculty in our public schools.

Cindy Geisman

Self

Bastrop, TX

I oppose this bill. This bill violates our freedom of religion rights by promoting one religion over others to our children. This strips parental rights and may violate separation of church and state.

Susan Kelly

Self; Retired Journalist

Austin, TX

I oppose SB 11 which addresses prayer and Bible reading in public schools. We cannot afford to give time to Christianity and ALL OTHER religions represented by our diverse student bodies, so should refrain from mixing prayer into a school day. Please vote NO on SB 11. Thank you.

Cindy Fountain

TX Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry/Member

Cleburne, TX

I Oppose SB 11 and urge the committee to vote against it. This legislation creates another layer of bureaucracy that schools don't need. Its only purpose is ideological, not educational. Further, if the proponents want to inject religion into public schools, it will not be religious freedom unless prayer is allowed from all religions and distributed equally across the calendar.

Susan Anderson, Dr.

self

Benbrook, TX

I respectfully oppose Senate Bill 11, which proposes a period of prayer and Bible reading in Texas public schools. While I fully support the right of individuals to pray or read religious texts voluntarily and privately—as is already protected by law—this bill risks crossing the line between protecting religious freedom and promoting religion through public institutions.

Public schools serve students from a wide range of faiths, cultures, and belief systems. Senate Bill 11 undermines the responsibility of our public education system to remain neutral on matters of religion by allowing school boards to embed religious practices into the school day. Even with consent requirements and legal waivers, such policies blur the line between church and state and risk marginalizing students from minority or non-religious backgrounds. These students may face peer pressure, social stigma, or feel that their beliefs are less valued. As a Unitarian Universalist, I believe in respecting the diversity of religious traditions and honoring the worth of every individual. Public schools should protect, not compromise, that diversity and freedom.

Rather than spending taxpayer resources defending potential legal challenges, I urge lawmakers to focus on the pressing needs of Texas students: improving academic outcomes, increasing teacher pay, expanding access to mental health services, and ensuring every child feels welcome and respected in their school environment.

Let's keep public schools spaces for learning—not for religious endorsement. Please oppose SB 11.

Eve Margolis

Self

Austin, TX

Separation of Church and state is still in the constitution. There should not be a period for prayer.

Kim Horton
Self
Weatherford, TX

Dear Chair Ken King Vice Chair and Representatives of State Affairs Committee,

As a country created and formed upon Judeo Christian values, I ask that you would vote favorably for SB 11.

In the 70's, I grew up in public schools hearing a simple prayer and even an encouraging verse read over a loud speaker along with the pledge of allegiance to our flag. But also, in the late sixties, at a public school in the north, I was one of a few who did not go to a mass on Friday afternoons. We had free time in our classroom to do homework, or read from our Bible. Neither of these instances hurt me and you learn to respect and be grateful for our country and freedom of religion.

Please allow this to be free in our public schools. We need God, who is our Creator, back in our schools more than ever.

Judeo Christian values and the free exercise there of should be unleashed into our places of education and not squashed in fear. Give this back to our local school districts.

Reading the Bible was one of the reasons our public schools were created. So that children could know God. Please allow God a place in our public education. This is not requiring but allowing freedom of religion for our children to experience and bring with it a healthy understanding of our first amendment.

Vote favorable for SB 11 and thank you for your time in reading this.
Blessings,
Mrs. Kim Horton

Heidi Gibbons, Ms.
self/retired
Austin, TX

The Constitution clearly says separation of church and state. I consider this such a private matter that I am appalled by the thought of requiring prayer by law to be done in schools. You would be taking control away from parents of what religion they raise their children in. Please vote no. I am a long-time Christian and respect everyone's choice of prayer or no prayer. This does NOT belong by law in schools!

Alexis Greco, Ms
Self
Round Rock, TX

What happened to the separation of church and state?! It's ridiculous to bring religious doctination to schools. That's why we have Bible and Catholic schools! Texas is becoming more and more like Gilead and it needs to stop. If you want to teach religion then do it at a school where they partake in it. Stop forcing children to study the Bible. Public schools should be learning and teaching core classes that will allow children to get good jobs. Timmy is not going to need religion to work in a factory or whatever job he wants to do! Texas is becoming such a joke. Enough with forcing religion in public schools!

Chelsea Williams
Self
FORT WORTH, TX

OPPOSE. Unless you plan to allow time for prayer and reading religious texts for Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, etc. students, this is a discriminatory bill. Include all religions in schools or none at all. Ultimately, public schools are not Sunday schools. Keep religion out of it.

Gina Mateer

Self

Austin, TX

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong opposition to Senate Bill 11, which would allow school prayer and Bible reading sessions in public schools during instructional time.

While religious freedom is a foundational American value, SB 11 threatens that freedom by blurring the line between church and state in a way that endangers the rights of all students. Public schools are not places of worship—they are places of learning, supported by taxpayer dollars and attended by students of every faith and belief system.

Here are key reasons why I urge you to reject SB 11:

- It violates constitutional principles. The U.S. Supreme Court has consistently ruled that government-sponsored religious activity in public schools—particularly during the school day—is a violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Students and staff are already free to pray or read religious texts privately and voluntarily; this bill moves toward state-endorsed religion, which is unconstitutional.
- It undermines inclusivity. Students come from diverse religious and nonreligious backgrounds. Endorsing specific religious practices in schools can marginalize or alienate students who don't share those beliefs. No student should feel pressured or excluded in a public school setting based on their faith—or lack thereof.
- It invites legal and financial risk. Enacting policies that contradict longstanding legal precedent could expose school districts to lawsuits, draining resources that should be spent on instruction, materials, and teacher support—not litigation.
- It distracts from educational goals. Public schools face pressing challenges: underfunding, teacher shortages, and learning loss. Instead of addressing these urgent needs, SB 11 risks turning classrooms into battlegrounds over religion.

Religious freedom means freedom of religion, not the imposition of religion. Protecting that freedom requires that public institutions, especially schools, remain neutral in matters of faith. SB 11 violates that neutrality and risks harming the very students it claims to support.

I respectfully urge the committee to vote NO on SB 11 and protect the religious liberty of all Texas students and families.

Jamie Bechtelheimer, Mrs.

Self

Dallas, TX

I am firmly opposed to making any religious text a part of the daily routine in public schools. One of basic founding principles of our country is the separation of church and state and freedom of religion. Making religion a part of public school students' daily routine goes against those principles.

Dianne Newman, Educator

Self

Denton, TX

I have worked in education for all my professional life and Do Not see the need or legality to have any religious doctrine to be a part of any school activities. I respect the need for separation of church and state. No teachers or other educators should forced to do the proposed. It is a parent's job to educate their child in religious activities not schools/teachers.

Aidong Ji, Ms

Self

Allen, TX

Agree

catherine bremer, ms
self; animal caretaker at Thundering Paws
blanco, TX

no. I am a christian and also believe in the separation of church and state.

Laura Santos Farry
Self
Austin, TX

I oppose this bill in that it goes against the beliefs of those of other religious beliefs.

Madison Moss
Self
Austin, TX

I oppose this bill. Public schools are meant to be safe spaces of education for children of all backgrounds and religion. No one should be forced to practice religions that are not their own. Can you imagine forcing children to practice religions outside of Christianity in public schools (you wouldn't)... So it is wrong to do it here.

Alice Barnett
Temple Emanu-El, Dallas
Dallas, TX

Temple Emanu-El in Dallas is a Reform Jewish Congregation with over 2550 member families. We oppose SB-11, a bill that would authorize school districts to permit organized time during the school day for prayer and Bible readings. We believe this is an unconstitutional violation of the First Amendment and the fundamental rights of parents to raise their children in the religion of their choice without their children feeling coerced into prayer during the school day. This is especially true for younger children who may not yet be established in their own religious upbringing as well as for all children who are subject to peer pressure to belong and feel welcome in their classes. While SB 11 is clear that parents must opt their children into the "voluntary" prayer time, it is still coercive for those children whose parents have not given permission when many of their classmates leave to attend prayer readings at school. It is also unfair to parents that only opt their children into prayer activities due to their children's feelings of being left out of school activity.

This is an unnecessary intrusion of religion into public schools. Students have the "absolute right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt the instructional or other activities of the school" (Education Code Section 25.901). They can pray before tests, before lunch, during breaks, before athletic or other events. Adding organized prayer in public schools even if "voluntary" we believe violates the First Amendment.

We note that if this Bill becomes law Texas will spend many tax dollars to defend this scheme to bring organized religion into public schools. This is not a good expenditure of tax dollars.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our opposition to this Bill. We urge you to reject this bill.

Taylor Fox
Self
Austin, TX

Against. This bill WILL be used to create division amongst students of different religious backgrounds. Not everyone in Texas is religious, much less "Christian." That's the way it should be.

Kevin M. Jackson Jr.
Self/Educational Diagnostician
AUSTIN, TX

As a lifelong public school educator, father of two daughters in public schools, and a Roman Catholic, I oppose SB11. I believe every Texan has the right to religious freedom and every family has a right to make their own choices faith. I believe SB 11 violates those fundamental freedoms. I believe since SB 11 imposes a government-mandated prayer period, the bill coerces students into religious activities that may conflict with their personal beliefs or those of their families. The separation of church and state is rooted in the founding of our great country. The first clause of the Bill of Rights states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." Additionally, founding father Thomas Jefferson wrote in his 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptist Association, when the American people adopted the establishment clause they built a "wall of separation between the church and state." SB 11 is not about religious freedom, but about government-mandated prayer. I ask you to vote it down and side with our founding fathers of our great country.

Patricia Hall
self
Pflugerville, TX

I am writing as a voting constituent opposing SB 11 which provides for a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools. Our country was founded on religious freedom and that the government would not establish a state religion. Our public schools are funded with tax dollars and the separation of church and state follows our constitutional rights. Religious teachings belong in the home and in our churches not in public schools. Growing up, our schools had a moment of silence in which all students could quietly reflect on their particular thoughts, prayers and religious teachings. This opportunity still exists in the public school system and our state should not pass any bill that includes prayer and bible teachings in our public schools. Even with an opt-in system, this bill would place our schools in a position of facilitating religious practices which conflict with the Establishment Clause and would also incur a cost for enforcement and legal liability issues. Religious liberty exists in our homes, churches, synagogues, and other places of worship. We should not support this bill.
?Vote NO on SB 11.

Respectfully,
Patricia Hall, Voter

Marti Bier
Texas Freedom Network
Austin, TX

Good afternoon. I'm Marti Bier, Chief Program Officer at the Texas Freedom Network, an organization of parents, young people, faith leaders and other Texans who support public education and religious freedom. I'm here to testify in opposition to SB11.

It is unnecessary to affirm the right of students to pray or read religious texts. Students and school employees already have and exercise their constitutionally protected religious freedom across the state every day, including myself when I was a public school student. In an attempt to solve a problem that does not exist, this bill creates many problems of its own.

Special periods set aside for prayer and Bible reading in public schools are inherently coercive, no matter how voluntary this bill pretends they would be. In fact, the bill actually modifies the Education Code to allow a teacher – an authority figure – to encourage a student to pray. That's the job of parents and congregations, not public schools that enroll students who come from many different faith traditions or whose families are not religious at all.

Moreover, keep in mind that the section of the bill that would allow teachers to encourage students to pray also gives teachers the power to encourage students to refrain from prayer. Public schools have no business encouraging or discouraging matters of faith.

In large part because of these concerns, this bill leaves public schools vulnerable to expensive First Amendment lawsuits. That's true whether or not the school district is represented by the state attorney general. It makes no sense to put tax dollars at risk, particularly at a time when public schools are struggling for the funds they need to serve their students.

You can protect religious freedom by ensuring public schools teach students to respect the rights of everyone. That includes respecting the student or teacher who prays with friends at lunch or reads the Bible or the Quran between classes.

Religious freedom is a foundational value in our state and a cornerstone of our democracy. But this bill would undermine the religious freedom of all Texas students, teachers and families.

Thank you.

Nancy Cramblit, Mrs
Self/Benefits Portal Construction
Colleyville, TX

We must remain One nation, under God! I urge your support for this legislation for the greatest possible good comes from God and the more time with Him the better!

Roxanne Crowe
Self
San Antonio, TX

There needs to be a separation of church and state. To force religious text on children goes against the basis of america.

Christen George-McFerrin
Self
Houston, TX

I believe in the constitutional separate of Church and State and do not support a period of prayer and/or reading the Bible or other religious texts in public schools. Please demonstrate your support of the Constitution by not voting for this bill.

Cecelia Wolsey
Self/ Operations Manager
Fort Worth, TX

Hello, I am Cecelia Wolsey and I am a parent in Fort Worth. I am against SB 11 because religion does not belong in public schools. I am a religious person but children should not be subjected to religion at public schools. It is not fair to the diversity of religious beliefs. Thank you

Jeanne Dupre' Weido, Mrs.
Self
Houston, TX

Good morning my name is Jeanne Dupre' Weido. I am writing to ask you to please vote NO on SB 11! While I agree with the basic elements included in the bill I am concerned that we are stepping into the separation of church and state arena thus setting the state of Texas for legal ramifications of going against the Constitution of the United States of America. In addition if we were to implement this bill into law then ALL faiths would have to be allowed the same time and space as whatever the bill is proposing to allow. This is the responsibility of parents and religious-based schools and organizations. Please seriously consider to vote NO on SB 11.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the great state of Texas!

Arnold Grothues
Laid off/retired
Arlington, TX

SB11 is about imposing religion on all students no matter what their parents believe. Religious kids already have ample time to pray: before school, before each class starts, during recess, etc.
Kids can already pray in school. This bill is an unconstitutional morality mandate by our state government.

Meg Sheehy
Self
Buda, TX

I strongly oppose this bill. Keep your religious beliefs out of our public schools!!

Milinda Morris, Dr.
self
Houston, TX

Chairman King, Vice-Chairman Hernandez, and State Affairs Committee members, I support SB 11- relating to a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools. The United States was founded on Judeo-Christian values. Christian values are educational for Christian children; therefore, these children should have an opportunity to pray or read their Bibles in public schools, increasing the knowledge of their faith. Public schools are funded to be a place of learning for children.

Alison Swallow
Self
Austin, TX

The Bible and religious texts should not be forced in public schools.

Melissa Huckabay

Self

CYPRESS, TX

I oppose SB 11 because it dangerously further erodes the separation of church and state. Not all students are Christian, and forcing all students to participate in prayer or Bible study infringes on students' freedom of religion rights in the first amendment. Public school should serve all the public, not just Christians or Christian interests. Thank you.

Barbara Hanlon

self - retired, formally worked as business analyst and educator

Austin, TX

I oppose SB 11 because school-sponsored prayer is prohibited by the First Amendment. We should not allow government interference in students' right to practice a faith or not practice a faith. I believe schools should focus on academic topics, and parents and family members of students should guide them in prayer, the bible or other religious text. Please vote NO for this bill.

Kim Jorns, Mrs

Self

Fort Worth, TX

In my lifetime I have witnessed the removal of all things moral in schools. It's time we admit our youth is lost & hurting & needs spiritual guidance that worked for generations! Plz vote FOR this bill to reinstate the choice to recognize God again in our schools! Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Kim

Terry Kosobud

Grandparents for Public Schools

Austin, TX

Please vote "NO" on this SB11. For literally hundreds of years, students have always had time to pray in schools. Bill SB11 is anti-Christian. God would never approve of schools forcing students to pray to him. This bill perverts Christian beliefs.

Jana Dodd

Yourself/retired

Austin, TX

OPPOSE SB11

Donna Wesling

Self - retired

Lakeway, TX

Freedom of religion - we should not be requiring prayer in schools

Sue Blomquist

Self Broker

San.Antonio, TX

Opposed Senate Bill 11

Debi Frances

Self/retired

Corpus Christi, TX

OPPOSE 11

Lindsey Crow, Mrs
Self-retired RN
Austin, TX

Oppose this bill. State and church should be separated.

Doris Hatcher
Self, retired
Bulverde, TX
OPPOSE SB11

Reed Bilz, Ms
Self
Fort Worth, TX

I am the mother of six children who have benefited from a Texas public school education.
I want future students to have freedom from religion in their school environment.

This bill would allow time for prayer and reading religious texts in schools. School is not the place for inflicting religion on vulnerable children who are a captive audience. Doing so violates their first amendment rights.

I urge you to vote NO on SB 11.

Bridget Brame
self
Georgetown, TX

My family and friends SUPPORT this bill. SB 11 allows for an optional period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools.

Dede Fox
Dede Fox writer/retired educator
The Woodlands, TX

As a public school educator who retired after 40 years of service, I know--children of every religion and no religion attend our classes. Religious texts are appropriate in religious schools, but they are NEVER appropriate in public schools. As a child, I was forced in my third grade class to memorize sections of a Bible that wasn't one we used at home. That was wrong. Kids and staff pray all the time in the public schools; they do so silently whenever they want. But they should never, ever be forced to do so.

Tracy Cornelius
Self / homemaker
Austin, TX

I oppose this bill. Religious freedom is foundational to our country. Our country is founded on the ideal of religious liberty. I support our constitutional right to freedom of religion. I am concerned that this bill represents an incursion of state mandated religion into our lives.

Mary Lou Price, Dr.
Self
Austin, TX

I oppose. SB11. School prayer and Bible reading do not belong in the public schools. Our laws mandate separation of church and state. The public schools exist to teach children the information they need to know to survive and thrive as adults, no matter what religion they may adhere to. The places to advocate for one religion over others are home and religious centers. Please vote no on this attempt to take time away from essential learning for those of all religions.

Krista Varney
self
Grand Prairie, TX

As an individual with a bachelor's degree in theology, practicing Catholic and a former public school student, I oppose this bill. Faith and religion are important components of my life, but I do not agree with requiring time to pray in our public schools. That is a parents responsibility to share and encourage with their children at home, not a required public school activity.

sam pedrotty
self, engineer
league city, TX

There are already days set aside for this (like Sunday). We already don't have enough time in public schools to provide children essential education to prepare them to succeed in life and let our communities flourish. This bill has no advantage (religious texts can be accessed without issue outside the school day) and puts education, and therefore the development of our communities, second. While this bill appears to be open to many faiths in its text, it's unlikely its implementation will be (see various historical examples). This also can create a chilling effect on our communities and is exactly where there needs to be separation between church and state.

Sophia Vassilakidis
self
Houston, TX

I tried to submit a comment before, but i think the internet ate it. I'm not trying to cheat by writing twice.

Please vote against SB 11. At best, it's redundant. At worst, it's a form of state sponsored bullying of children and families that don't "pray standard". It's also a big fat hairy waste of limited class time.

I'd like to point out that keeping public schools secular protects kids, teachers, admin, etc, from throwing toes out to get stepped on. As someone raised greek orthodox, i find much of American Protestant "Christianity" to be un-christian, a-hostorial paganism. Not every kid in public school is going to get a voucher to whatever version of religious school their already rich parents want to silo them in. The public school kids left behind by the voucher thievery shouldn't have to worry that they're the odd brat out for praying / not praying, that what they choose to do is being observed/judged by teachers. The Constitution provides that Church / mosque / temple and state should remain seperate not just to prevent one religion from being dominant, but to protect the privacy of religious experience. PUBLIC schools are public, but prayer is private, personal, or meant for a shared community. No publicized prayer time for public schools.

Andrew H
self, data analyst
Austin, TX

My name is Andrew, I live in Travis County, and I was once a student in Texas public schools.

Needless to say, I OPPOSE this bill.

What is this man, seriously, what are we doing as a state?
PUBLIC schools funded by taxpayers should NOT have designated religious time, as it goes DIRECTLY AGAINST the first amendment. It continues to be a slippery slope where Texans lose little freedoms as the months go on.

Mayes Middleton has a section on his website about protecting babies and children. I would think this includes their first amendment freedoms. Hypocrite.

On this basis alone, I urge the committee to OPPPOSE and vote NO on this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Jake Wilson
Self - CPA
Fort Worth, TX

I support SB 11 by Senator Middleton relating to a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools, subject to parental approval.

Thank you Senator Middleton for authoring SB 11.

It would be the choice of the school boards, whether to adopt this time period, and the choice of parents if their child should attend.

Psalm 119 verse 160 teaches us that the entirety of God's word is truth, and every one of His righteous judgments endures forever.

We should recognize the importance of prayer and faith-based instruction for our youth, and how Prayer and God's Word may help with a variety of complex challenges our youth face as they navigate this ever-changing world. Sometimes, our youth get only one day (if even that) of Sunday school or youth group through church, which I don't think is enough time to fully address everything that God's Word can teach them.

I'm aware that the majority of the House State Affairs Committee already voted last session in favor of allowing school chaplains in public schools. So I'm confident that the majority of this committee recognize the importance of faith-based instruction for our youth.

SB11 has already passed the Senate 23-7 with bipartisan support. Please advance this very important bill for our students, teachers, schools, and communities to the floor, and ensure that it passes this session.

Thank You,

Jake Wilson
Fort Worth, TX
SD9 and HD91

Marlene Rubin, Ms
Self
Houston, TX

I believe in separation of church and state. I am Jewish and I find this bill to be highly offensive. When I was young, I had to say the Lord's prayer and sing Christmas songs mentioning Jesus and I still have memories of it.

Kel Wilpitz
self
Dallas, TX

Please support this bill!

Sydney Greenblatt
Self
Houston, TX

I am opposed to SB11. Prayer and Bible reading must be done in a person's house of worship, their home, but not in school. Our Constitution separates church and state so that citizens can make their own choices about religious practice or not. It is not the legislatures business.

Katherine Hagood

self

Fort Worth, TX

As a parent of 5 children and 7 grandchildren I feel it is very important that our kids are taught morals in school. The Bible is the best source for this. Our country was founded on Biblical principles - and truths such as Honor your Father and Mother, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal - are principles we want all of our children to live whether you are a Christian or not. Not to mention this is a great History book! Please support this bill!!!

Justin Swink

Self

Watauga, TX

As a parent, I'm deeply opposed to this bill. It is a direct infringement on the separation of church and state. I urge the committee to strike down this bill. No one but me and my spouse should have any influence over our children's religious beliefs or attitudes. I fail to understand how this bill encourages any kind of educational value. If it's a question of moral education, that should be handled by parents and caregivers OUTSIDE the public school system. Those who want a faith centered education already have many options for private schools and church-based homeschool curricula to meet their demand. This bill smacks of big government and big brother. This is not an American bill because it prioritizes a few over the many.. Strike this bill down.

Thank you

Traci Sigmon

self/recruiting lead

Austin, TX

Church and state should continue to be separate. Abide by the Constitution (as so many Republicans claim to believe in), and keep your religious preferences out of our public schools.

Nancy Ruff

self retired

Jonestown, TX

i strongly oppose this bill. Sepeation of religion and state is fundamental to our demoracy. Not all students are Christians - will observance of their religious beliefs & practices also be made part of the school curriculum? Jewish, Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Islams, Buddhism etc. Spend timeteaching the values common to all true religious beliefs - respect for the rights of others to worship as they choose, kindness, forgiveness, love for your fellow man.

Elaine Branagh

Self/retired

Austin, TX

Opposed! Parents who wish prayer and religious text reading to be part of their children's days have ample time to do so at HOME or have the option of sending their children (tragically with my tax dollars) to private schools with that as part of their curriculum! The separation of church and state was a founding principle of this country that we seem to have forgotten.

Karen Santhanam

Self

Cedar Park, TX

I oppose SB 11. It's wrong on so many levels. First, it disrespects the multitude of religions in our country. It detracts from the basic educational needs of knowledge da which should be better funded in our public schools. It prioritizes one religion over others. Christianity has clearly not changed behavior despite its wise teachings. Many Christian leaders are examples of sinful behavior rather than respectable behavior. This is just state wrong approach. While I appreciate your grandstanding for your constituents, this is wrong for Texas. Vote NO on SB 11.

Susanne Rothschild, Ms

Self, Educator, Mother, Professional Project Manager

Houston, TX

SB11 Middleton - Prayer in School. Please vote FOR SB 11 by Middleton

Relating to a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools. Our country and Constitution was founded on religious freedom. The practice of having a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools gives all students, teachers, and administrators to start the day or meetings by having a brief moment to connect with a Higher Power to request assistance with their academic activities, harmonious relationships, and all requirements for a fulfilling and uplifting day. Please vote FOR this bill.

Heidi Bray

self

Austin, TX

NO I OPPSE THIS BILL !!! You republicans should be reading the Bible--you could learn a thing or two

Lani Hawk

Self

Plano, TX

Only the Bible read. Or only Christian text readings. No islamic teaching of any sort allowed. Wake up Texas they are trying to take over our state.

Aubrey Mason

self

SAN ANTONIO, TX

GOD needs to be back in our schools

Karen Brown

Self

Rockwall, TX

I respectfully request that you support this Bill and vote yes.

Samuel Boorse

Self

Adkins, TX

Texas is part of the Bible belt, and I believe the reason Texas is such a blessed state, is because of the acknowledgment of God as the Lord of our great State. Prayer is allowed in prisons, why not schools. In so doing, we may prevent future generations from going to prison. By showing them that there is a God, and that we should be having a relationship with Him; this will show dependence not on ourself but on God. Teaching them to converse with Him as a group and personally.

Samuel McCutchan

Self

Waxahachie, TX

Support

Kimmie Fink

Self/Senior Editor, BBC Learning

Liberty Hill, TX

My name is Kimmie Fink, and I am the mother of two public school students in Liberty Hill Independent School District. I unequivocally OPPOSE SB11. This bill is a clear violation of the Establishment Clause. School-sponsored prayer violates my and my children's religious freedoms. As a former teacher, I'm deeply concerned about how this bill will impact non-Christian and non-religious students. Reading something other than the Bible or not participating will make them targets for bullying. Students who do not feel welcome or accepted in their community schools cannot learn and will not thrive. Students who do want to read the Bible or pray at school already have the protected right to do so. Thank you for your time. Please do your jobs and focus on something that will actually benefit students like fully funding our public schools.

Wilner Jeudy, MD

Myself - Physician

Houston, TX

Vote NO on SB11. This bill is completely unnecessary. Students already have the right for a moment of silence on their own, which is absolutely their right. Mandating this, and adding language such as "Bible" shows favoritism to Christianity which is 1) unAmerican 2) unconstitutional and 3) immoral. Religious groups and secular groups alike are unified on this position - protect the separation of church and state. Vote NO on SB11.

Daniel Martinez

Self

Dallas, TX

The separation of church and state is part of the foundation of what our country was founded for. My name is Daniel I am a christian and a student born and raised in Dallas. I know the importance that faith has in peoples lives but that is a private matter that the government should not meddle with. The point of school is to prepare young ones for the world that they will inherit and for them to grow socially in a country and state that grows more diverse every year. Religion should be left to a students family and church not something to be advocated by the government, which should remain neutral so as to better serve all of its citizens equally. In the same way that texas politicians preach for smaller government and for sex ed to be left to the discretion of parents, religion being pushed by our state government goes against what the will of the people is and should be prevented. Do not allow this to pass. Thank you.

Laura Gallier

Self-retired CPA

Houston, TX

Oppose SB 11. It is not necessary, as there is already a time set aside in public schools for silent prayer, and there is always time for a person to read the Bible or pray during school hours, including their lunch break. I object to the State Attorney General using statewide taxpayer resources to defend a school or school district accused of violating a student's or teacher's rights or otherwise harming them.

Elizabeth Morgan

self-paralegal

Austin, TX

Hi, I am a lifelong Texan who grew up in our public school system. I am against SB 11. Our schools do not need a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools. We have a precedent of separation of church and state in Texas and in the United States. Our schoolchildren need adequate time to spend learning important subjects and preparing for life in the workplace. We need to better prepare our students to become productive and responsible members of society. Our students do not need to spend time focusing on religious texts unless they are taking a religion course.

I strongly implore you to oppose and vote against this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Susan Hornbuckle

SELF

Dripping Springs, TX

One of the main premise's of our Constitution is the division of Church and State. Forcing one religion on every student regardless of their family's beliefs is unconstitutional

Barbara Baruch, Mrs

self retired

San Antonio, TX

Sen Middleton's bill is not wanted by myself or any member of my 9 member family. Children have the ability to pray silently at all times and we have our own church thank you very much. I can't imagine how a public school teacher could supervise the prayer of our children. Are you training school staff in theology or allowing untrained personnel to use their own religious theology to indoctrinate students? I urge you to vote against this bill. Moreover in my opinion this is an unconstitutional use of facilities and staff under the Texas and US constitution.

Linda Francis

Self

Dallas, TX

Please do not advance this bill. It violates constitutional principles requiring separation of church and state. Also, parents (not schools) should be the primary source for religion and faith instruction for their children. Also I am concerned that Christianity will be promoted and there are children whose families do not practice Christianity and they may feel left out or marginalized.

Linda Zeccola

Self. Nurse

Austin, TX

Does this mean only Christian prayers? We have many children in our public schools from other faiths. If we have Christian prayer, then we must also have prayers from every other religion. It is best to have no prayer in a public school

Brian Lee

Self retired

El Paso, TX

Hello, I am writing to ask you to support this bill.

German Amador

Self, retired engineer

Houston, TX

Hello - I am against SB11. I believe public schools should remain free of religious influence. There are plenty of hours in the day for children to pray outside of school hours should they choose to do so. From a practical standpoint, we don't need to impose additional requirements on our public schools. A prayer time would require resources such as dedicated rooms (how many - one for each religion?), additional staff (the children cannot be left unattended), and incur scheduling complexities (how many prayer times, how to make up the instructional time lost in the classroom). All these issues will, no doubt, incur additional costs. Is the state providing funds for these costs? There are also social issues with children being singled out for either participating or not participating in the prayer time. And to be fair, any private school benefiting from vouchers should also be required to comply with this bill, if passed. There are going to be unintended consequences to the school, the staff and the children if intent of this bill is implemented. Please do not vote this bill out of committee.

Thank You.

Kim Battle

Self

Austin, TX

Where is the separation of church and state? Please oppose and keep religion out of our public schools!

Shelley Sallee

Self

Austin, TX

Why would you waste time on a bill that is blatantly unconstitutional? Oppose this bill.

Lisa Brenskelle

self

Houston, TX

Anyone in a public school today can pray, so no dedicated period for prayer is needed. Prayer is not the purpose of a public school, and educational time should not be used for non-educational purposes. And, a period of prayer will, of necessity, marginalize some students/faculty - those who are in the minority either because they opt to pray, opt not to pray, or pray differently from the majority. This will invite bullying and our public schools certainly do not need more bullying. And, who would lead this period of prayer? Teachers are not clergy, and are not trained to provide prayer leadership. Teachers are figures of authority in public schools, and having a teacher (or other respected staff person, such as the principal or a coach) lead prayer could make students feel obligated to participate - this is coercive. There is no need for this legislation, it is outside the mission of a public school, and it will very likely cause harm to some students.

Bianca Arvin-Eagle

Self

Lago Vista, TX

I OPPOSE SB 11. Religion has zero place in public school. I find the efforts by the government to coerce children into practicing any type of religion at school offensive and frankly, anti-church, anti-family, and huge government overreach. Furthermore, name-checking the Bible in the bill negates the "religious freedom" promoted by the bill. I want NONE of my tax dollars to go to devising or implementing any part of this program, from funding the paper to print the permission slips to funding whoever might be hired as a czar to orchestrate this system- or more likely have this responsibility tacked on to their already bloated workload. Use my tax dollars to educate, not attempt to convert my kids. OPPOSE SB 11

Ana Luisa Salas-Porras

SELF

Austin, TX

I strongly urge the committee to vote NO. This is over reach and an inappropriate use of school property. I believe in separation of Church and State. Isn't bible teaching what Sunday school is for? Who will be teaching these bible classes and how will they be vetted? Will all religions be allowed to participate and teach from their religious books? Who will monitor what is going on in these bible classes? Teachers have enough to do already. This is yet another culture war issue. Fully fund our public schools and raise teacher salaries. Then I'll be open to discussing bible lessons. Keep schools and churches separate. Vote No on this bill.

Margaret Williams

self

Austin, TX

i am a Christian and OPPOSE this bill.

Josee Holland
Self
Cedar Park, TX

My name is Josee Holland and I am against SB 11 for many reasons. I'm a 3rd generation Texan, a lifelong Texas taxpayer and most importantly, a mother to 2 young boys. We are a proud interfaith family, and work hard to raise our children in the faith that we choose. SB 11 is in direct contrast to my right as a parent to raise my children in the way that I deem best. The bill is clearly in violation of the 1st amendment by ignoring the separation between church and state. Our overstretched teachers don't need to be dealing with the religious dogma that will result from handling the fallout from something like this, because that is the job of parents and religious communities. But, my primary concern is my children's experience in school. When I was in school I was bullied for not being Christian, oftentimes because I self-selected out of religious activities that didn't even require my participation. This was decades ago, well-before the legislature became fixated on pushing religious values on our children. I can only imagine the pressure and alienation my children will experience if bills like this one are forced upon our public schools. Let's be clear - this bill has nothing to do with religious freedom or morality. It has to do with pushing Christian values on our public school children. SB 11 favors some children over others, something nobody, let alone our great state, should never do. The legislature needs to focus on important things like lowering property taxes, not unconstitutional religious discrimination in school. Please vote no on SB 11.

Eric Ogea
Eagle Mountain Pregnancy Help Center
Azle, TX

Any entities supported by the general public tax dollars (state or federal funding) cannot represent or not represent any particular group of people. If taxes are collected from all people groups, then all people groups must be, or not be, represented equally, regardless of particular religion.

Deborah Glast
Self
Austin, TX

Separation of church and state is the law! Time for prayer or reading from the Christian bible or other religious texts during school or at school is NOT legal and is NOT what Texas schools nor Texas students need. They NEED funding for teachers, buildings, and books with accurate science & sex ed! Forcing one religion on everyone is the antithesis of what the founders of this country intended. Religious freedom means not forcing Texas children of all or no religion to be subjected to that of one group. Keep YOUR religion out of OUR Texas schools!

Kevin A Hale

Libertarian Party of Dallas County

Dallas, TX

Defending Voluntary Expression and Separation of State from Religion

SB 11 allows school districts and charter schools to mandate a daily period of prayer and Bible or religious text reading for students and employees, contingent on signed consent forms. While framed as voluntary, the structure of this policy imposes unnecessary government involvement in religious practices and creates a coercive framework under threat of state litigation protections and waivers.

LPTexas Stands for Religious Liberty, Not Religious Regulation

The Libertarian Party of Texas fully supports the right of individuals to practice religion freely, including prayer in school. However, we oppose all efforts by the government to sponsor, require, or formalize religious activity, even when technically voluntary (Platform § I.1.b, Freedom of Religion). True religious liberty must remain free from state involvement, influence, or endorsement.

State-Coordinated Religion Is Inherently Coercive

SB 11 establishes a government-sanctioned religious practice period in public schools and provides legal and financial protections to districts that adopt it. This represents state favoritism toward religion and invites the chilling of dissent or non-participation. Mandating a policy—even with opt-in waivers—creates social and institutional pressure that contradicts the Libertarian principle of voluntarism (Platform – Statement of Principles).

Local Control and Educational Focus Undermined

LPTexas supports local autonomy and decentralization in education (Platform § II.2.a, General Education), and opposes top-down mandates or politically motivated rituals in public institutions. SB 11 distracts from core educational missions and imposes unnecessary administrative burdens and legal entanglements on school districts.

Conclusion

The Libertarian Party of Texas opposes SB 11 as a state-driven effort to insert coerced religious observance into public education. While affirming every individual's right to pray voluntarily, LPTexas rejects policies that place the government in the role of religious facilitator. We urge lawmakers to reject SB 11 and instead defend both freedom of religion and freedom from state-sponsored religious coercion.

Anthony Elmo

Retired

Fort Worth, TX

more pain in the ass meddling from "conservatives". keep your religion out of the public schools. hard no.

Regina Ricks

Self

Katy, TX

Students should not be subjected to any form of forced public prayer or reading of religious texts. Doing so breaks the First Amendment Establishment Clause. Public schools are government run entities, therefore they should not be espousing any ideas of religion either for or against. There's a plethora of different beliefs amongst students including those that don't believe at all. Forcing these students to participate in prayer or religious education they don't believe in or agree with is nothing short of forced indoctrination.

Krishna Desai, Dr

Self

Irving, TX

Please don't support this bill to pass

Rishi Desai

Self

Irving, TX

Do not support

Glen Mertz, Mr
Self
Georgetown, TX

I believe in the separation of church and state. Keep religion out of public-school education.

Sandra Gavrilla
self-retired
Coppell, TX

Public schools are not the place for religious practices to occur in a formal "period of prayer." Children are highly influenced by their peers' actions and this places undue pressure to "pray" during this period, even when parents must sign a consent form. It is unclear where the prayer will take place and who would administer it. And if every student consents, it will be read over the school loud speaker. Again, pushes more pressure on students to agree and ask for consent from their parents. This is a bad idea. If parents want their children to pray during the day, they can do it before or after school - or send them to a private or charter school that clearly states this goal (now that vouchers are approved.)

Cheryl Smith
Self, United Methodist pastor, retired
Pearland, TX

As an ordained Christian minister, (United Methodist,) I hold my religious tradition in the highest regard. However, I believe that other people have the right to choose their own religious tradition or no tradition at all. The public sphere is no place to prioritize one religion over another. Unless the texts of all religions will be subject to reading and the prayers of all religious traditions will be available for speaking, then I cannot support any public entity using just one sacred text or one hold tradition. This bill is nothing but religious bullying and I am strongly opposed to it. I am a constituent of Sen Middleton.

Cynthia Grubb
self / self
Dallas, TX

This bill opens up a can of worms. We do not want prayers or readings from the Koran or other religions other than Christians. It is bad enough that our PC Texas House allowed Muslim prayer and declared a Pakistan Day!! We do not support this bill at all!!

Sharron Guzman, Retired Librarian & Educator
Self/ retired educator
Port Isabel, TX

As an educator for 35 years, the last twenty of which as the elementary school librarian in Mission, Texas, I feel compelled to ask that SB 13 be stopped from passing. I am asking you and others in this committee to oppose Senate Bill 13 because it would give a few politically appointed parents decision making power over what books all students in a community have access to. Many librarians who are working in the public schools have received their Master's in Library Science degrees and have been trained on how to select books for their students. Book banning is becoming more common lately and there are some people that want to limit what books are allowed in schools and libraries. I would like my district to focus on improving math and reading scores instead of worrying about controlling what students are reading. Please help support the education system and literacy programs to ensure that students have access to books and resources for students today.

JAMES GALLAGHER
self
JONESTOWN, TX

Prayer, the reading of the Bible and religious texts need to be done at home not in public school. I don't want teachers of different faiths or beliefs providing religious instruction to my children. Religious instruction is my parental prerogative. Oppose this bill and stop bringing this idea up year after year.

Sarah Berel-Harrop
self/seminarian
Farmers Branch, TX

I am a seminarian on the path to Unitarian Universalist ministry with a call to chaplaincy. As a chaplain at a childrens hospital, I have prayed with and for children and their families during pastoral encounters where they are searching for meaning in their time of crisis and discerning their relationship with the sacred and the God of their understanding. This exploration and relationship must always be free and voluntary to be authentic. Each person's connection with God is sacred. It is not for other humans to interfere with or coerce this connection.

One sponsor of this bill has stated: "There is eternal life and if we don't expose our children and others to that, then when they die, they'll have one birth and two deaths." Thus, these bills promoting a particular version of Christianity in public schools are overtly an attempt to convert people to Christianity. However well-meaning, this is inappropriate anywhere but in a theocracy. Parents are the primary religious and spiritual educators of their children and have the right to teach their children at home. This includes the decision to teach no religion. When schools push sectarian views on children and youth, it undermines the home-based spiritual teachings. It's particularly offensive when the state uses its power to subject children and youth who are members of a minority religion, or whose parents have decided to refrain from raising their children within a particular religion, to conversion efforts. Simply put, this is the theft of tradition and culture from those students.

Consent forms are not sufficient. They serve only to identify the students who are not members of the majority religion to their teachers and peers. This bill removes the word "encourage" from Section 25.901 and as such once targeted by opting out of prayer, teachers and peers would be allowed to "encourage" them to change their minds and join the prayer. Teachers and students may feel very real pain when they think that others will spend eternity in hell and feel compelled to encourage them to change. However - this is up to God and the student involved, not them. "Encouragement" quite easily crosses the line to religious harassment when it does not desist. Rather than encouraging self-differentiation and tolerance, the period of prayer would provide a permission structure for proselytization and other forms of spiritual violence.

One of my colleagues lived in a predominantly Muslim country and was surprised to find that folks who asked about her faith would say "that's great that you have your own faith" and say no more. She experienced more toleration than we would have here in Texas.

The early Christians lived under the imperial cult in Rome. Whatever their home beliefs, they were required to pay feascance to the Emporer to participate in public life. How ironic that there are Christians today who seek to make their own religion the imperial cult of modern-day Texas.

Please reject this harmful bill.

Kathryn Malone
Selt
Walnut Springs, TX

Separation of church and state is a key principle of the United States. The Pilgrims came to this country to escape religious persecution. Religious freedom is a fundamental human right, not something that should be mandated by the state to pray or worship God a certain way. Defeat this bad bill! I will vote against legislators who support it.

Jan Realini, Dr.
self; retired physician
San Antonio, TX

I strongly OPPOSE this bill and urge each member of the Committee to vote AGAINST it.
School organized prayers are an inappropriate part of the school day in a public school. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution restricts the government from establishing religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. Article 1 (Bill of Rights) of the Texas Constitution, Sec. 6 states that "No human authority ought, in any case whatever, to control or interfere with the rights of conscience in matters of religion, and no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious society or mode of worship."
In public education, it is the child's parents--not the school or any other governmental entity--which is in charge of the child's religious development. In spite of the provisions for consent by the parents and the possibility of varied religious texts for readings, such prayer in school will shape the child's perception of what is official, normal, and correct. This could well damage the faith development of children whose families do not align with the book or prayer offered. Also, there would be social pressure on students to be like other students. THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE IN OUR COUNTRY.
Please OPPOSE this bill.

Idona Griffith
Retired
Austin, TX

I strongly oppose SB 11 -- this is a direct violation of the separation of church and state upon which our nation was founded. Period.

Rachel Preston
self/teacher
Austin, TX

I urge the committee to vote against the advancement of this bill.

BILL KING
self - retired judge
Austin, TX

This bill is entirely performative. The religious prayer/study can be the Bible (which version: Catholic or Protestant?) or any other religion. It can not be within physical presence or hearing of anyone who did not consent to the prayer/study. It can not take away from any instructional time. It can not be broadcast on the PA system schoolwide. In other words, a student or group of students can gather away from others to pray or talk about religion. News Flash: This is what students can do now. This bill adds nothing to free expression of religion. It is solely so some members of the legislature can say in their elections that they brought the Bible back into schools. What a complete waste of taxpayer money.

Grow a spine. Vote NO on SB 11.

Michael Hurewitz
self
Austin, TX

Please oppose this violation of the separation of church and state.

Lisa Hill
self
Austin, TX

I urge that you vote AGAINST this extremely harmful bill which violates the 14th amendment of the US Constitution. This bill violates the separation of church and state by introducing religious activities into public school classrooms. Lawmakers should focus on addressing critical issues like school funding and teacher shortages instead of pushing religious agendas. This bill could lead to discrimination against students or teachers who do not adhere to the dominant religious beliefs within the school. PLEASE BE ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY AND VOTE NO.

Michelle LaGrave, Rev
self, clergy
Austin, TX

I adamantly oppose this bill. The separation of church and state is crucial to religious freedom in our country. I am a clergyperson who leads prayer, reads the Bible, and preaches from Biblical texts AND I oppose the use of prayer and the Bible in our public schools. We cannot privilege one religion over another, nor can we privilege one version of Christianity over another. Leave religion to the parents, the clergy, and the churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques!

Mary Selby
Self
Austin, TX

I oppose this bill.

Pamela Laflin
Positive Advocates for Voter Engagement
Houston, TX

I oppose SB37. Please let parents lead the religious education of their children. Please don't have the State choose which religious texts that are introduced, perhaps in a translation that I do not agree with. Please don't make children who may not be in a majority religion feel any more excluded than already happens. Vote "NO" on SB 11.

Sharon Loveall
self
Fort Worth, TX

Yes! Read the Bible in the classroom. Pray in the classroom. Post the Ten Commandments in each classroom. Texas and our great nation went downhill after we took God out of schools. Bring back morals to everyday teaching and everyday life.

Margaret Gebren
Self
Bedford, TX

Retired elementary music educator. Against this Bill, as we already have a “moment of silence” across all grade levels. Students stop, pray or meditate, or whatever. Then Pledge of Allegiance. Students can read the Bible during free reading, at lunch, or during recess. There really is no time to allot 15 minutes for reading and prayer. If your Bill requires an “out loud” reading, which Bible? Which part? What do the students whose parents object do at that time?

Kristin Rice, Rev.

Self/Pastor

Texarkana, TX

I'm a pastor and parent, and I certainly want to encourage my kids and any kids to grow in their faith and spirituality, but that is NOT what the public school day is for and shouldn't be subsidized by taxpayer dollars. There is ample time for these pursuits outside of school hours. Our kids need to be focused on their academics during the school day and that's what we are paying teachers to provide.

Mary Smith

Concerned Women for America and self

Arlington, TX

Students need time to reflect and be silent and think. Prayer and reading the Bible or other religious text allows this time of reflexion and allows students to hear positive information that can change lives and influence daily living in a positive way. I support this bill and its importance to students lives.

Alexis Matthews

Self

Elgin, TX

Good day. My name is Alexis and I am a mother here in Texas and I oppose SB 11.

Recently, I have noticed an increasing number of bills that seek to contest or dismantle our right to freedom from religion. More and more bills have been introduced in this legislative session to force Christianity and its text into our schools. From the listing of the 10 commandments to the option of the Bluebonnet curriculum in our public schools that utilizes passages of the Bible in reading classes.

No other religion gets this preferential treatment within our schools nor does anyone push for it.

If we allow this bill to pass, what's next? Will we also allow pagan rituals? Are the pillars of Islam or Judaism going to be posted? Will the Santanic Bible become a staple in our classrooms? How about the Quran?

Religion is a private matter. Meant to be handled privately. If you want to bring your Bible from home to read and pray in your free time, go ahead. That is already allowed without wasting tax payer time or money discussing this in mass.

There are a million other things Texans desperately need and here we are debating whether we should allow one religion to be pushed into the classroom. How about we first make it safe to be in the classroom without getting shot. Can we focus on a bill that protects our children from bullets instead of pushing a religious agenda?

Kids are not being deprived of religion in schools. They're welcome to bring their Bibles and religious texts to read in between periods or after their work is finished. This is yet another worthless bill that does nothing to better the lives of Texans.

To close I would just like to remind every Christian law maker who is favorably considering this bill to remember the teachings inside your Bible, especially verse Matthew 6:6-7 in which you have been called upon by YOUR GOD to pray at home in secret and not out in the streets. You claim to believe and yet flout the very teachings you claim to uphold.

Jana Long, Director
Concerned Women for America of Texas
Dallas, TX

I am Jana Long, the Director of Concerned Women for America of Texas and I am testifying on behalf of CWA Legislative Action Committee in support of SB 11. Our Constitution allows freedom of religion. Freedom of religion is considered by many people and most nations to be a fundamental human right. As prayer is an integral part of our American heritage, it allows personal guidance for our behavior and principles by which to live. A school environment is an appropriate environment to learn these principles.

I ask that you support SB 11.

S Kuehl
Self retired
Houston, TX

This bill is absurd. 50+ years ago it was decided that this had NO place in Public schools. Something about separation of church and state. Actually, I was one of those forced to listen to "Christian" rhetoric each morning.. and now the state of Texas is much much more diverse. But then again, yall have already taken our tax dollars for public education and stolen these dollars for "choice" which you've always had. As of today, there still is separation of church and state and this bill belongs in the toilet. VOTE NO PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS HORRIBLE BILL OUT OF COMMITTEE
thanks

Leslie Spatz, Dr.
self/retired professor
Stephenville, TX

I oppose SB 11 because this infringes on my right to have public education separate from religion. This country was founded on the separation from church and state. This bill infringes on any student and their parental view regarding any religious event in schools. What if the student has a different religion from what the Bible says and what the religious text says? This requirement and view is so incredibly narrow-minded, that it will teach prejudice and intolerance. I know because I saw it with my own eyes from 50+years of teaching. What about Judaism? What about Buddhism? What about Islam? What about the Koran? Having read the entire Bible, there are many sections that I disagree with and disapprove of having my own children be required to hear. This is nothing less than religious indoctrination by the Texas legislature. Not everyone in this country is Christian. My daughter spent 4th grade through 12th grade in a rural Texas public school. The irony here, is that Texas legislators seem to be so focused on a student becoming indoctrinated to the far left. However, my daughter was only indoctrinated to the far right. Her teachers in 6th grade, 7th, 8th and 9th grade embarrassed her and humiliated her in front of the entire class because her mother had different views than what the conservative teachers thought needed to be taught. She was made an example in front of everyone. I will never forgive those teachers. I strongly oppose SB 11 and encourage you to vote against this terrible bill.

Karen Sterling
Self/Retired
Cedar Creek, TX

This is blatantly unconstitutional.

Linda Paterson
Self /homemaker
Austin, TX

Separation of church and state exists for a reason. Please just stop this insanity.