

JAN 17 2014

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RELIGION.

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 302A-1139, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 " [†]§302A-1139 [†] Religious education[-]; freedom of
4 religion policy. (a) The department shall provide for the
5 release of, and shall release, any pupil in any public school
6 from attendance at the public school for a period not to exceed
7 sixty minutes each week during the school year, on such days and
8 during such school hours as the department shall designate, for
9 the purpose of receiving religious instruction from the
10 religious organization of the pupil's choice when the release is
11 requested in writing by a parent, guardian, or other person
12 having custody or control of the pupil. Actual attendance at
13 the sessions of the religious instruction shall count as
14 attendance at the public schools for all purposes where
15 attendance forms the basis of computation.

16 (b) The privilege of this release shall be withdrawn by
17 the department in case the pupil does not actually attend the
18 sessions of religious instruction. No teacher of the public



1 schools shall participate in religious instruction during the
2 school hours for which the teacher is employed to teach in the
3 public schools, and no public funds shall be used directly or
4 indirectly for religious instruction, at any time when its use
5 would otherwise be required in connection with the regular
6 program of the school.

7 (c) Teaching about religion in public schools shall be
8 permitted where it is a natural part of the curriculum to study
9 the history of religion, the role of religion in the history of
10 the United States and other countries, and the influence of
11 religion on the art, music, literature, and social customs of
12 various cultures.

13 (d) Prayer and other religious observances shall not be
14 organized or sponsored by any public school or any
15 administrative or support unit of the public school system.

16 (e) Any student may engage in voluntary, student-initiated
17 religious activities or discussion; provided that the religious
18 activities or discussion are not disruptive or coercive in any
19 manner.

20 (f) Secondary students may meet in public schools during
21 non-instructional time to pray, read religious materials,
22 discuss faith, and invite other students to join their religious

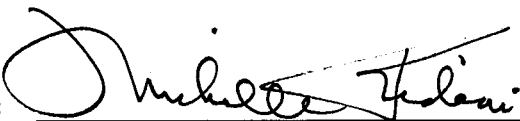


1 group; provided that the public school has established a limited
2 open forum for one or more student-initiated groups."

3 SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
4 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

5 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

6

INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 2328

Report Title:

Religion; Public Schools; Freedom of Religion

Description:

Permits teaching about religion in public schools where it is a natural part of the curriculum to study the history, role, and influence of religion. Allows students to engage in voluntary, student-initiated religious activities and discussion; provided that the religious activities and discussion are not disruptive or coercive.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

