

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4130

To enforce the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 20, 1996

Mr. HOKE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To enforce the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Freedom of Religious
5 Expression Act of 1996”.

6 **SEC. 2. FREE EXERCISE RIGHTS PROTECTED.**

7 Students in public schools—

8 (1) have the same right to engage in individual
9 or group prayer and religious discussions in or con-

1 nected with school as they do to engage in other
2 comparable activity;

3 (2) may express their beliefs about religion in
4 the form of homework, artwork, and other written
5 and oral assignments free from discrimination based
6 on the religious content of their submissions;

7 (3) have a right to distribute religious literature
8 to their schoolmates on the same terms as they are
9 permitted to distribute other literature that is unre-
10 lated to school curriculum or activities; and

11 (4) may display or otherwise communicate reli-
12 gious messages, including on items of clothing, to
13 the same extent they are permitted to display or
14 communicate other messages.

15 **SEC. 3. CIVIL ACTION.**

16 A person aggrieved by a violation of section 2 may
17 in a civil action obtain appropriate relief. Such an action
18 may be instituted against a governmental entity as well
19 as against any person engaging in the violation.

20 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM HOT-**
21 **LINE.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall estab-
23 lish, maintain, and publicize a toll-free number to provide
24 timely and accurate information and respond to questions
25 regarding the rights protected by this Act.

1 (b) OFFSET.—Notwithstanding any other provision
2 of law, funds available under section 458 of the Higher
3 Education Act shall be reduced by \$5,000,000 for fiscal
4 year 1997.

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