

Department of Planning and Budget 2014 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB236

House of Origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Carrico

3. Committee: Education

4. Title: Student religious viewpoint expression.

5. Summary: The proposed legislation would codify the right of students to (i) voluntarily pray or engage in religious activities or religious expression before, during, and after the school day in the same manner and to the same extent that students may engage in nonreligious activities or expression; (ii) organize prayer groups, religious clubs, "see you at the pole" gatherings, or other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other activities and groups; and (iii) wear clothing, accessories, or jewelry that display religious messages or religious symbols in the same manner and to the same extent that other types of clothing, accessories, and jewelry are permitted. The bill also requires each school division to adopt a policy to permit a student speaker to express a religious viewpoint at any school event at which a student is permitted to publicly speak. The policy shall declare each such school event to be a limited public forum, provide a neutral method for the selection of student speakers, and require each school principal to provide a disclaimer in advance of each such school event that the school division does not endorse any religious viewpoint that may be expressed by student speakers.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: None.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary. See Item 8.

8. Fiscal Implications: The bill would require local school divisions to adopt policies regarding student speech and prayer. The bill will not impact state finances.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Local school divisions

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: None.

11. Other Comments: Similar to HB493.

Date: 2/4/2014 dpb/smc

Document: G:\GA\FIS 2014\SB236.doc