

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT FULL TEXT

Ballot Title:

Classroom Acknowledgement Amendment

Ballot Summary:

This amendment allows the citizens of Florida to establish a historical expression known as the Pledge of Acknowledgement. It consists of twenty-two words that formally recognize the role of Almighty God and divine providence in America's founding as a nation.

Article and Section Being Created or Amended:

Article IX, Section 10

Full Text of the Proposed Amendment:Article IX - Section 10 - Pledge of Acknowledgment

(a) PURPOSE. The purpose of the Pledge of Acknowledgment is to educate and remind elementary, middle, and high school students (K – 12th grade) about the role of divine providence of Almighty God in America's founding, and to encourage greater respect for the government of the United States. The Pledge of Acknowledgment is a historical utterance or expression exactly as the Pledge of Allegiance is a patriotic utterance or expression. It is to be presented only from a historical perspective and in a nonproselytizing manner.

(b) LANGUAGE. The Pledge of Acknowledgment consists exclusively of the following twenty-two words. "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence on You, and we ask Your blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country." The term "Almighty God" in the Pledge of Acknowledgement is a reference to the same Almighty God as listed in the preamble to the Florida State Constitution and is synonymous with the term "Creator" in the United States Declaration of Independence.

(c) PROVISIONS. The Pledge of Acknowledgment shall be recited at the beginning of the school day in each public elementary, middle, and high school (K – 12th grade) in the state. When it is recited, students, faculty and administration shall stand at attention, men removing any headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes. The Pledge of Acknowledgment will also be recited at any other school function where the Pledge of Allegiance is recited, and/or the National Anthem is played or sung. This includes but is not limited to athletic contests, graduations, assemblies, etc. Each student shall be informed by a written notice published in the student handbook or a similar publication, pursuant to state laws, that the student has the right not to participate in reciting the Pledge of Acknowledgement. Upon written request by his or her

Initiative Information

Date Approved 12/12/2018

Serial Number 18-15

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parent/guardian, the student must be excused from reciting the Pledge of Acknowledgement, including standing. When the Pledge of Acknowledgment is given, unexcused students must show full respect by standing at attention, men removing their headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes, as provided by Florida statute. All public schools in the state are encouraged to coordinate, at all grade levels, instruction related to our nation's founding and the Founding Fathers acknowledgement of a "firm reliance on the protection of divine providence" from Almighty God as expressed in America's Declaration of Independence. It is to be presented only from a historical perspective and in a non-proselytizing manner.

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