

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 17
By: Parker
State Affairs
6/8/2023
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

As proposed, S.B. 17 amends current law relating to the right of a public school employee to engage in religious speech or prayer while on duty.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 22, Education Code, by adding Section 22.012, as follows:

Sec. 22.012. RELIGIOUS SPEECH OR PRAYER. Prohibits the right of an employee of a school district or open-enrollment charter school to engage in religious speech or prayer while on duty from being infringed on by the district or school or another state governmental entity, unless the infringement is:

- (1) necessary to further a compelling state interest; and
- (2) narrowly tailored using the least restrictive means to achieve that compelling state interest.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or October 1, 2023.