COMMITTEE REPORT

April 9, 2014

**H. 4458**

Introduced by Reps. Sandifer and Owens

S. Printed 4/9/14--H.

Read the first time January 14, 2014.

**THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND PUBLIC WORKS**

To whom was referred a Bill (H. 4458) to amend the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, by adding Section 59‑1‑456 so as to provide a school district may educate students about the holidays, etc., respectfully

**REPORT:**

That they have duly and carefully considered the same and recommend that the same do pass:

PHILLIP D. OWENS for Committee.

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑1‑456 SO AS TO PROVIDE A SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY EDUCATE STUDENTS ABOUT THE HOLIDAYS OF TRADITIONAL WINTER CELEBRATIONS IN A CERTAIN MANNER, AND TO PROVIDE THAT A SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY DISPLAY CERTAIN SYMBOLS ASSOCIATED WITH THESE HOLIDAYS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY UNLESS THE DISPLAY INCLUDES A MESSAGE THAT ENCOURAGES ADHERENCE TO A PARTICULAR RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Article 5, Chapter 1, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑1‑456. (A) A school district may educate students about the history, customs, and symbols of traditional winter celebrations. In conjunction with providing this education, the district also may allow students and district staff to offer traditional greetings regarding the celebrations including, but not limited to:

(1) Happy Hanukkah;

(2) Happy Holidays; and

(3) Merry Christmas.

(B) Except as provided in subsection (C), a school district may display on school property scenes or symbols traditionally associated with traditional winter celebrations including, but not limited to, a menorah, a nativity scene, and a Christmas tree, if the display includes a scene or symbol of:

(1) more than one religion associated with the traditional winter celebrations; or

(2) one religion associated with the traditional winter celebrations and one secular scene or symbol, but only if an equal number of each are displayed.

(C) A display relating to a traditional winter celebration must not include a message that encourages adherence to a particular religious belief.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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