

House \_\_\_\_\_ Amendment NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Offered By

1 AMEND House Committee Substitute for Senate Substitute for Senate Committee Substitute for  
2 Senate Bill No. 68, Page 39, Section 160.1055, Line 100, by inserting after all of the said section  
3 and line the following:  
4

5 "160.2501. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Missouri Religious  
6 Liberty in Schools Awareness Act".

7 2. Each public school shall post a statement containing the following or substantially similar  
8 information:

The Missouri Religious Liberty in Schools Awareness Act requires  
that students and employees of public schools that are operated at  
public expense be advised and therefore, encouraged regarding  
constitutional rights and liberties in the educational setting that are  
assured by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution,  
free from government coercion:

For public school students, such rights and liberties include, but are  
not limited to, that a student may, in a manner that does not interrupt  
or displace the educational mission of the public school:

Express the student's beliefs about religion to others;

Pray or engage in religious expression or read the Bible or other  
religious texts or materials during free time including, but not limited  
to, in the classroom;

When relevant to the subject matter, express the student's beliefs  
about religion in a class assignment; and

Form, organize, and participate or refrain from participating in,  
prayer groups, religious clubs and other religious gatherings if other  
secular groups, clubs, and gatherings are permitted.

For public school employees, such rights and liberties include, but  
are not limited to, that an employee may, in a manner that does not  
interrupt or displace the educational mission of the public school:

Action Taken \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully discuss the employee's faith with other school employees;

When relevant to the subject matter, discuss the influence of religion on history and culture;

Enjoy the accommodation of the employee's religious beliefs as required by law;

Sponsor student religious clubs if secular student clubs are sponsored; and

Enjoy freedom from religious discrimination as provided by law.

3. (1) The statement required to be posted under this section shall be posted in a prominent location in each of such public school's buildings in which the academic instruction of students actually and regularly occurs.

(2) Such statement shall be posted in a similar form and manner as other information required by law is posted.

4. The provisions of this section shall be construed to be consistent and in conjunction with section 160.2500."; and

Further amend said bill, Page 41, Section 160.2710, Line 10, by inserting after all of the said section and line the following:

~~"[161.026. 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 161.032 or any other provision of law, the governor shall, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, appoint a teacher representative to the state board of education, who shall attend all meetings and participate in all deliberations of the board. The teacher representative shall not have the right to vote on any matter before the board or be counted in establishing a quorum under section 161.082.~~

~~2. The teacher representative shall be an active classroom teacher. For purposes of this section, "active classroom teacher" means a resident of the state of Missouri who is a full-time teacher with at least five years of teaching experience in the state of Missouri, who is certified to teach under the laws governing the certification of teachers in Missouri, and who is not on leave at the time of the appointment to the position of teacher representative. The teacher representative shall have the written support of the local school board prior to accepting the appointment.~~

~~3. The term of the teacher representative shall be four years, and appointments made under this section shall be made in rotation from each congressional district beginning with the first congressional district and continuing in numerical order.~~

~~4. If a vacancy occurs for any reason in the position of teacher representative, the governor shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, a replacement for the unexpired term. Such replacement shall be a resident of the same congressional district as the teacher representative being replaced, shall meet the qualifications set forth under subsection 2 of this section, and shall serve until his or her successor is appointed and qualified.~~

~~5. If the teacher representative ceases to be an active classroom teacher, as defined under subsection 2 of this section, or fails to follow the board's attendance policy, the teacher representative's position shall immediately become vacant unless an absence is caused by sickness or some accident preventing the representative's arrival at the time and place appointed for the~~

1 meeting.

2 ~~6. The teacher representative shall receive the same reimbursement for expenses as~~  
 3 ~~members of the state board of education receive under section 161.022.~~

4 ~~7. At no time shall more than one nonvoting member serve on the state board of education.~~

5 ~~8. The provisions of this section shall expire on August 28, 2026.]~~  
 6

7 161.026. 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 161.032 or any other provision of  
 8 law, the governor shall, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, appoint a teacher  
 9 representative to the state board of education who shall attend all meetings and participate in all  
 10 deliberations of the board. The teacher representative shall not have the right to vote on any matter  
 11 before the board or be counted in establishing a quorum under section 161.082.

12 2. The teacher representative shall be an active classroom teacher. For purposes of this  
 13 section, "active classroom teacher" means a resident of the state of Missouri who is a full-time  
 14 teacher with at least five years of teaching experience in the state of Missouri, who is certified to  
 15 teach under the laws governing the certification of teachers in Missouri, and who is not on leave at  
 16 the time of the appointment to the position of teacher representative. The teacher representative  
 17 shall have the written support of the local school board prior to accepting the appointment.

18 3. The term of the teacher representative shall be four years, and ~~[appointments made under~~  
 19 ~~this section shall be made in rotation from each congressional district beginning with the first~~  
 20 ~~congressional district and continuing in numerical order]~~ for the second and succeeding  
 21 appointments, the newly appointed teacher representative shall not be appointed from the same  
 22 congressional district as the two immediately preceding teacher representatives.

23 4. If a vacancy occurs for any reason in the position of teacher representative, the governor  
 24 shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, a replacement for the unexpired  
 25 term. Such replacement shall be a resident of the same congressional district as the teacher  
 26 representative being replaced, shall meet the qualifications set forth under subsection 2 of this  
 27 section, and shall serve until his or her successor is appointed and qualified. If the general assembly  
 28 is not in session at the time for making an appointment, the governor shall make a temporary  
 29 appointment until the next session of the general assembly, when the governor shall nominate a  
 30 person to fill the position of teacher representative.

31 5. If the teacher representative ceases to be an active classroom teacher, as defined under  
 32 subsection 2 of this section, or fails to follow the board's attendance policy, the teacher  
 33 representative's position shall immediately become vacant unless an absence is caused by sickness  
 34 or some accident preventing the teacher representative's arrival at the time and place appointed for  
 35 the meeting.

36 6. The teacher representative shall receive the same reimbursement for expenses as  
 37 members of the state board of education receive under section 161.022.

38 7. At no time shall more than one nonvoting member serve on the state board of education.

39 ~~[8. The provisions of this section shall expire on August 28, 2025.]~~

40 161.355. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Media Literacy and  
 41 Critical Thinking Act".

42 2. As used in this section, "media literacy" means the following:

43 (1) An individual's ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and participate with all forms of  
 44 media, such as:

45 (a) News in print; and

46 (b) Social media content, such as images, text, video, and other media content;

47 (2) An individual's ability to recognize bias and stereotypes in media messages;

1       (3) The foundational skills of digital citizenship and internet safety; and

2       (4) In the classroom, media literacy includes integrating the process of critical analysis of  
3 media messages into the daily classroom curricula.

4       3. The department of elementary and secondary education shall establish the "Media  
5 Literacy and Critical Thinking Pilot Program". Such pilot program shall be implemented and  
6 administered during the 2026-27 and 2027-28 school years.

7       4. Under the media literacy and critical thinking pilot program, the department of  
8 elementary and secondary education shall select five to seven diverse school districts to participate  
9 in the pilot program and from which to study data related to the outcomes of the pilot program in  
10 such school districts.

11       5. A pilot program site shall:

12       (1) Address each component of media literacy;

13       (2) Develop successful strategies for student learning within the daily classroom curricula in  
14 all grades or for a selected preschool to grade twelve level;

15       (3) Identify high-quality resources for such pilot program; and

16       (4) Demonstrate and report how such site addresses the following in the classroom:

17       (a) News content literacy, which is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and distinguish  
18 verified information from opinion and propaganda and the opportunity to practice verification;

19       (b) Visual literacy, which is the ability to find, interpret, and evaluate images and visual  
20 media such as photographs, videos, illustrations, drawings, maps, diagrams, and advertisements;

21       (c) Digital fluency, which is the ability to understand and follow the norms of safe and  
22 responsible technology use and how media influences attitudes and behaviors; and

23       (d) Digital literacy, which is the ability to be technically fluent and able to make informed  
24 decisions about content encountered online, recognize how networked technology affects behavior  
25 and perception, and create and effectively communicate with digital media tools.

26       6. The guidelines developed as a result of the study of the information gained from the pilot  
27 program shall provide students with the following information:

28       (1) The purpose and acceptable use of various social media platforms;

29       (2) Social media behavior that ensures cybersafety, cybersecurity, and cyber ethics;

30       (3) The potential negative consequences of failing to use various social media platforms  
31 responsibly, such as cyberbullying;

32       (4) The ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act on all forms of digital and written  
33 communications;

34       (5) Digital ethics, etiquette, respectful discourse with individuals who have differing  
35 opinions, safety, security, digital footprints, and the identification of rhetoric that incites violence;

36       (6) Cyberbullying prevention and response;

37       (7) The significance of algorithms;

38       (8) Ways to identify online misinformation;

39       (9) A general knowledge of the economic structure of the digital landscape; and

1       (10) The importance of the right to freedom of speech as contained in the Bill of Rights of  
 2 the Constitution of the United States including, but not limited to:

3       (a) The central role that the right to freedom of speech has in the history of the United  
 4 States; and

5       (b) The applicability of protections for freedom of speech for online interaction in school  
 6 settings that the department of elementary and secondary education shall provide to school districts.

7       7. The guidelines developed as a result of the study of the information gained from the pilot  
 8 program shall provide school districts with samples of learning activities, resources, and training  
 9 that promote critical thinking and the skills necessary to evaluate all forms of media.

10       8. Before August 1, 2028, each pilot program site shall submit a report to the department of  
 11 elementary and secondary education describing the implementation of and the information gained  
 12 from the pilot program.

13       9. Before January 1, 2029, the department of elementary and secondary education shall  
 14 compile the reports submitted from the pilot program sites and submit a summary report to the  
 15 general assembly containing at least the following information:

16       (1) Qualitative and quantitative insights on how the pilot program sites addressed media  
 17 literacy;

18       (2) A compendium of high-quality strategies and resources used by educators;

19       (3) Any professional development used or required;

20       (4) Recommendations about what facilities, instructional materials, and technologies are  
 21 needed to implement a media literacy and critical thinking program statewide;

22       (5) Exploration of additional policies, administrative mechanisms, and legislative  
 23 recommendations for implementing best practices and standards statewide; and

24       (6) A draft of proposed clear, inclusive media literacy and critical thinking state standards  
 25 for preschool to grade twelve, compiled by drawing from key media literacy skills and competencies  
 26 in existing state standards and from the pilot program results.

27       10. Standards developed under this section shall be included for consideration by the  
 28 department of elementary and secondary education during the state standards review immediately  
 29 following the termination of the pilot program.

30       11. The media literacy and critical thinking pilot program shall terminate on June 30, 2028.

31       12. This section shall expire on December 31, 2028."; and

32  
 33 Further amend said bill by amending the title, enacting clause, and intersectional references  
 34 accordingly.