

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 166
Committee Substitute Favorable 3/2/23

Short Title: American Indians Graduating with Honors Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 23, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ALLOW AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS TO WEAR CULTURAL OBJECTS
3 AT PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONIES.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** The title of Article 29D of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes reads
6 as rewritten:

7 "Article 29D.

8 "~~Student Prayer and Religious Activity~~ Activity and Cultural Expression."

9 **SECTION 2.** Article 29D of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by
10 adding a new section to read:

11 "**§ 115C-407.40. Cultural expression at graduation ceremonies.**

12 A student that is, or is eligible to be, enrolled as a member of a State or federally recognized
13 Indian Tribe shall be allowed to wear objects of cultural significance as part of the student's
14 regalia at any graduation ceremony for a school within a public school unit in which the student
15 is a graduating participant. For purposes of this section, objects of cultural significance are
16 defined as bird feathers and plumes."

17 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

18 "**(k) Cultural Expression at Graduation Ceremonies. – A charter school shall comply with**
19 **G.S. 115C-407.40 at all graduation ceremonies.**"

20 **SECTION 3.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

21 "**(19) Cultural expression at graduation ceremonies. – A regional school shall**
22 **comply with G.S. 115C-407.40 at all graduation ceremonies.**"

23 **SECTION 3.(c)** G.S. 116-239.8(b) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

24 "**(22) Cultural expression at graduation ceremonies. – A laboratory school shall**
25 **comply with G.S. 115C-407.40 at all graduation ceremonies.**"

26 **SECTION 3.(d)** Section 6(d)(22) of S.L. 2018-32 reads as rewritten:

27 "**(22) Article 29D, ~~Student Prayer and Religious Activity~~ Activity and Cultural**
28 **Expression.**"

29 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.



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