

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

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HOUSE BILL 681

Short Title: Posting of Ten Commandments in Schools. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Davis; Carpenter, Gillespie, Harrington, Hill, Hilton, Morris, Rayfield, Russell, Setzer, and Warner.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

March 19, 2001

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE DISPLAY OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN
THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-81(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Civic Literacy. –

- (1) Local boards of education shall require during the high school years the teaching of the nation's founding and related documents, which shall include at least the major principles in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.
- (2) Local boards of education shall require that high school students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nation's founding and related documents in order to receive a certificate or diploma of graduation from high school.
- (3) Local boards of education shall include among the requirements for graduation from high school a passing grade in all courses that include primary instruction in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.
- (3a) Local boards of education shall allow and may encourage any public school teacher or administrator to read or post in a public school building, classroom, or event, excerpts or portions of writings, documents, and records that reflect the history of the United States, including, but not limited to, (i) the preamble to the North Carolina Constitution, (ii) the Declaration of Independence, (iii) the United States Constitution, (iv) the Mayflower Compact, (v) the national

1 motto, (vi) the National Anthem, (vii) the Pledge of Allegiance, (viii)
2 the writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the founding
3 fathers and Presidents of the United States, (ix) decisions of the
4 Supreme Court of the United States, and (x) acts of the Congress of the
5 United States, including the published text of the Congressional
6 Record. Local boards, superintendents, principals, and supervisors
7 shall not allow content-based censorship of American history in the
8 public schools of this State, including religious references in these
9 writings, documents, and records. Local boards and professional
10 school personnel may develop curricula and use materials that are
11 limited to specified topics provided the curricula and materials are
12 aligned with the standard course of study or are grade level
13 appropriate.

14 (3b) An object containing the words of the Ten Commandments may be
15 displayed on real property owned by a local school administrative unit
16 along with other documents of historical significance that have formed
17 and influenced the United States legal or governmental system. The
18 display of an object containing the words of the Ten Commandments
19 shall be in the same manner and appearance generally as other
20 documents and objects displayed and shall not be presented or
21 displayed in any fashion that results in calling attention to it apart from
22 the other displayed documents and objects.

23 (4) The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level
24 curriculum-based tests developed and administered statewide
25 beginning with academic year 1990-91 include questions related to the
26 Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its
27 amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

28 (5) The State Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of
29 education, as appropriate, shall establish curriculum content and
30 provide for teacher training to ensure that the intent and provisions of
31 this subsection are carried out. The curriculum content established
32 shall include a review of the contributions made by Americans of all
33 races."

34 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.