

As Introduced

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H. B. No. 353

Representatives Click, Miranda

Cosponsors: Representatives Carfagna, Creech, Callender, Gross, Jarrells, John, Lightbody, LaRe, Miller, A., Miller, J., Patton, Russo, Smith, K., Young, T., White, Ferguson, Weinstein, Leland

A BILL

To enact section 3345.024 of the Revised Code to 1
enact "The Testing Your Faith Act" to require 2
each state institution of higher education to 3
adopt a policy providing students with religious 4
accommodations. 5

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 3345.024 of the Revised Code be 6
enacted to read as follows: 7

Sec. 3345.024. Each state institution of higher education, 8
as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, shall adopt 9
a policy that reasonably accommodates the sincerely held 10
religious beliefs and practices of individual students with 11
regard to all examinations or other academic requirements and 12
absences for reasons of faith or conscience. The policy shall 13
satisfy all of the following conditions: 14

(A) The policy shall permit a student to be absent for up 15
to three days each academic year to take holidays for reasons of 16

faith or conscience or participate in organized activities 17
conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, 18
church, or other religious organization. The institution shall 19
not impose an academic penalty as a result of a student being 20
absent as permitted in the policy. 21

(B) (1) The policy shall require that students be provided 22
with alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and 23
other academic requirements missed due to an absence described 24
in division (A) of this section, if both of the following apply: 25

(a) The student's sincerely held religious belief or 26
practice severely affects the student's ability to take an 27
examination or meet an academic requirement. 28

(b) Not later than fourteen days after the first day of 29
instruction in a particular course, the student provides the 30
instructor with written notice of the specific dates for which 31
the student requests alternative accommodations. 32

(2) An instructor shall accept without question the 33
sincerity of a student's religious belief. An instructor shall 34
keep requests for alternative accommodations confidential. An 35
instructor shall schedule a time and date for an alternative 36
examination, which may be before or after the time and date the 37
examination or other academic requirement was originally 38
scheduled, but shall do so without prejudicial effect. 39

(C) The policy shall require the institution to post both 40
of the following in a prominent location on the institution's 41
web site: 42

(1) A copy of the policy adopted under this section, which 43
shall include the contact information of an individual who can 44
provide further information about the policy; 45

(2) A nonexhaustive list of major religious holidays or 46
festivals for the next two academic years developed by the 47
chancellor of higher education. 48

The chancellor of higher education shall provide that list 49
to each state institution of higher education at the beginning 50
of each academic year. 51

(D) The policy shall require instructors to include in 52
each course syllabus a statement regarding the institutions's 53
policy adopted under this section. The statement shall include 54
both of the following: 55

(1) A description of the general procedure for requesting 56
accommodations; 57

(2) Contact information for an individual whom a student 58
may contact for more information about the policy adopted under 59
this section. 60

(E) The policy shall include a procedure under which a 61
student may notify the institution of any grievance with regard 62
to the implementation of the policy. 63

Section 2. This act shall be known as "The Testing Your 64
Faith Act." 65