

HOUSE No. 376

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Viriato Manuel deMacedo

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act Relative to Protecting the Religious Freedom of Students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Viriato Manuel deMacedo	1st Plymouth
Jeffrey Davis Perry	5th Barnstable
James Dwyer	30th Middlesex
Bruce E. Tarr	First Essex and Middlesex
Dennis Rosa	4th Worcester
James R. Miceli	19th Middlesex
Angelo M. Scaccia	14th Suffolk
Donald F. Humason, Jr.	4th Hampden
George N. Peterson, Jr.	9th Worcester
Stephen L. DiNatale	3rd Worcester
F. Jay Barrows	1st Bristol
Paul J. Donato	35th Middlesex
Todd M. Smola	1st Hampden
Kathi-Anne Reinstein	16th Suffolk
William Lantigua	16th Essex
Thomas J. Calter	12th Plymouth
Kevin J. Murphy	18th Middlesex

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT RELATIVE TO PROTECTING THE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM OF STUDENTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 1C of chapter 71, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by inserting, at the end thereof, the following new section:-

3 Section 1D. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, beginning with the
4 school year commencing after July 1, 2009, school districts shall adopt and implement a local
5 policy that allows for a limited public forum and voluntary student expression of religious views
6 at school events, graduation ceremonies, and in class assignments, and non-curricular school
7 groups and activities. The policy must require the district to ensure that a student does not
8 engage in obscene or indecent speech and shall provide a disclaimer that students' views are
9 neither endorsed nor sponsored by the district. Districts shall treat such expression, on an
10 otherwise permissible subject, in the same manner as the expression of a secular view. Districts
11 are prohibited from discriminating against any student on the basis of a student's expressed
12 religious views.