

HOUSE No. 376

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand 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
2 hereby 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
4 the 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.