



PHIL BRYANT
GOVERNOR

July 18, 2013

Dear School Board Member:

One of the greatest and most rewarding responsibilities life offers is the opportunity to inspire a child. As an education leader, you play an especially unique role in helping the children you work with reach their potential.

In our modern society, religious beliefs of all types have come under attack. The policies and regulations governing public religious expression—especially in our schools—have often created confusion instead of actually protecting the constitutionally guaranteed right to religious freedom we enjoy as American citizens.

To protect the rights of Mississippi schoolchildren and to support our educators by providing clarity on what can often become a clouded issue, I signed the Mississippi Student Religious Liberties Act of 2013 into law. This measure simply reaffirms what the United States Constitution already guarantees—voluntary student expression of religious viewpoints in public schools, voluntary expression of religious viewpoints in class assignments, and student freedom to organize religious groups and activities.

The searching out and growth of religious faith is foundational to many students' lives. It is my hope that this Act will both protect children's opportunities to freely explore this aspect of their lives and support the educators who play such an important role in their development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phil Bryant".

Phil Bryant
GOVERNOR