

1 State of Arkansas
2 88th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2011
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1032

5 By: Representative D. Altes
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For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO
9 DEVELOP AND ADOPT CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR AN
10 ACADEMIC STUDY OF THE BIBLE COURSE THAT MAY BE
11 OFFERED AS AN ELECTIVE COURSE IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL
12 DISTRICT; TO SET REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHING AN
13 ACADEMIC STUDY OF THE BIBLE COURSE IN A PUBLIC
14 SCHOOL; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

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18 TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
19 TO DEVELOP AND ADOPT CURRICULUM
20 STANDARDS FOR AN ACADEMIC STUDY OF THE
21 BIBLE COURSE.
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24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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26 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 16, Subchapter 1 is amended
27 to add an additional section to read as follows:

28 6-16-141. Academic study of the Bible course.

29 (a)(1) The State Board of Education shall develop and adopt curriculum
30 standards for an elective academic study of the Bible course or courses that
31 consist of a nonsectarian, nonreligious academic study of the Bible and its
32 influence on literature, art, music, culture, and politics and may be offered
33 to students in public school districts.

34 (2) The curriculum standards for an academic study of the Bible
35 course shall meet the:

36 (A) Academic rigor and standards of other elective courses



1 approved by the state board; and

2 (B) Requirements of the Arkansas Constitution and the
3 United States Constitution.

4 (b)(1) A public school district that elects to offer an academic study
5 of the Bible course shall implement the course in accordance with the
6 Arkansas Constitution and the United States Constitution, including the
7 manner in which the course is taught in the classroom and the assignment of
8 school district personnel teaching the course.

9 (2) Personnel assigned to teach the course shall be licensed to
10 teach in the State of Arkansas.

11 (3) Personnel shall not be assigned to teach the course based on
12 any:

13 (A) Religious test;

14 (B) Profession of faith or lack of faith;

15 (C) Prior or present religious affiliation or lack of
16 affiliation; or

17 (D) Criteria involving particular beliefs or lack of
18 beliefs about the Bible.

19 (c) An academic study of the Bible course offered by a public school
20 district shall:

21 (1) Be taught in an objective and nondevotional manner with no
22 attempt made to indoctrinate students as to either the truth or falsity of
23 the biblical materials or texts from other religious or cultural traditions;

24 (2) Not include teaching of religious doctrine or sectarian
25 interpretation of the Bible or of texts from other religious or cultural
26 traditions; and

27 (3) Not disparage or encourage a commitment to a set of
28 religious beliefs.

29 (d) The state board shall incorporate the requirements set forth in
30 this section into the criteria to be used to evaluate textbooks for an
31 academic study of the Bible course.

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