

South Dakota Governor Takes Bold Educational Initiative for the Kingdom

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, a Republican, is on a mission to “restore protections for prayer in schools.” The conservative governor announced this week her administration has drafted a bill aimed at that very goal.

The proposed legislation, which would create an opportunity for kids to “pray in schools at the start of every school day,” is sure to draw the ire of atheist activist groups and other First Amendment watchdogs, who are already taking aim at similar measures.

But Noem isn’t legislating sectarian prayer. The bill, titled, “A Moment of Silence,” would create a moment during which students are permitted to reflect on whatever they so choose.

Text of the bill specifically notes that the law would not offer permission or a pathway for schools to intentionally use the moment of silence to implement a “religious exercise.”

Furthermore, the governor said in a statement she’s hopeful pupils and teachers will use the time to offer an invocation or other reflective exercise, though use of the time is entirely voluntary.

“Every student deserves the opportunity to begin their day with a calm, silent moment,” Noem said. “I hope students will take this opportunity to say a quick prayer or reflect on their upcoming day. However, they choose to take advantage of this time, it will be beneficial to students and teachers alike.”

More specifically, the proposed act would require a moment of

silence each morning inside public schools—a time created to offer both kids and teachers “a reprieve from the frenzy of daily life” while also helping “set a tone of decorum that will be conducive to learning.”

Students and teachers would be given up to one minute to use as they wish, with the text of the proposed legislation offering suggestions for how these individuals might silently use their time.

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