

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6908

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 07, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to the pledge of allegiance.

**Brief Description:** Encouraging the meaning and history of the pledge of allegiance to be taught annually.

**Sponsors:** Senators Rasmussen, Holmquist, King, Hobbs, Roach, Shin, Benton, Weinstein, Kastama, Zarelli, Delvin, Pflug, Carrell and Stevens.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/7/08 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Eide, Hobbs, Holmquist, Kauffman, McDermott, Rasmussen, Weinstein and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

**Background:** Under current Washington law, every school board must require a U.S. flag in good condition to be displayed during school hours on or near every school building, except during inclement weather.

Flag exercises must be held in each classroom at the beginning of the school day, and in every school at the opening of all school assemblies, during which students may recite the following salute: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." Students not reciting the pledge must maintain a respectful silence. When it is feasible, the salute to the flag or the national anthem must be rendered immediately preceding interschool events.

**Summary of Bill:** Educators are encouraged to annually teach the meaning and the history of the Pledge of Allegiance. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must adopt rules to provide guidance for teaching the meaning and history of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Kids do not say the Pledge of Allegiance with much passion because they do not know what they are saying. If it is mandatory that the pledge be said, why isn't the meaning required to be taught? It is senseless to recite the Pledge without understanding the meaning of the words. Learning about the Pledge gives students a special and unique knowledge, and it no longer becomes just a routine.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Rasmussen, prime sponsor; Alex Hansen, Eatonville Middle School teacher; and Makaela Mautz, Annie Litzenberger, and Nicholas Phipps, Eatonville Middle School students.