State of Wisconsin
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-1631/1
FFK & MIM:klm

2025 SENATE BILL 53

February 21, 2025 - Introduced by Senators TOMCZYK and NASS, cosponsored by Representatives GOEBEN, GUSTAFSON, BEHNKE, BRILL, GUNDRUM, KNODL, KREIBICH, MURPHY, TITTL, TUSLER and WICHGERS. Referred to Committee on Licensing, Regulatory Reform, State and Federal Affairs.

AN ACT ***to amend*** 1.14 (title) and 118.06 (title); ***to create*** 1.14 (3) and 118.06 (3) of the statutes; **relating to:** requiring the display of the national motto in public schools and on public buildings.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires, within 6 months of the effective date of the bill, that each public building in this state display the national motto, "In God We Trust," in a location that is visible to the public if the building is open to the public, and in a location where notices for employees are regularly posted if it is a building that is not open to the public.

Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, the bill also requires that the national motto, "In God We Trust," be displayed in each public school classroom, including charter school classrooms. Under current law, each school board and governing body of a private school must display the U.S. flag in the schoolroom or from a flagstaff on the school grounds during the school hours of each school day.

Under the bill, the required displays in both public buildings and public schools must 1) be at least 11 inches by 14 inches, 2) be on a poster, in a framed document, or inscribed on a wall, and 3) be presented in English in a legible font.

For further information see the local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 1.14 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

1.14 (title) **Display of flag and national motto at public buildings, structures, and facilities.**

SECTION 2. 1.14 (3) of the statutes is created to read:

1.14 **(3)** Within 6 months of the effective date of this subsection .... [LRB inserts date], each state agency, state authority, and local governmental unit shall ensure that the national motto, "In God We Trust" is displayed at each building that is owned or occupied entirely by the agency, authority, or local governmental unit. The agency, authority, or unit shall ensure that the display satisfies all of the following:

(a) It is at least 11 inches by 14 inches.

(b) It is on a poster, in a framed document, or inscribed on a wall.

(c) The national motto is in English and is in a legible font.

(d) If the building, structure, or facility is open to the public, the display is in a location that is visible to the visiting public. If the building, structure, or facility is not open to the public, the display is posted in a location where notices to employees are customarily posted.

SECTION 3. 118.06 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

118.06 (title) **Flag, pledge of allegiance, national motto, and national anthem.**

SECTION 4. 118.06 (3) of the statutes is created to read:

118.06 **(3)** (a) Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, each school board and

governing board of a charter school shall cause the national motto, "In God We Trust", to be displayed in each classroom of each school under its control. Except as provided in par. (b), the school board or governing board shall determine the nature of the display.

(b) A school board or governing board of a charter school shall ensure that a display of the national motto under par. (a) satisfies all of the following:

1. It is at least 11 inches by 14 inches.

2. It is on a poster, in a framed document, or inscribed on a wall.

3. The national motto is in English and is in a legible font.

(END)