

SENATE BILL NO. 221

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR COWDERY

Introduced: 5/13/03

Referred: State Affairs, Health, Education and Social Services

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to posting the national motto in public buildings and schools."**

2 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
4 to read:

5 FINDINGS AND PURPOSE. (a) The legislature finds that

6 (1) the national motto of the United States of America is "In God We Trust";

7 (2) the national motto was adopted in 1956 and is codified at 36 U.S.C. 302;

8 (3) the national motto is deeply interwoven into the fabric of our civil polity;

9 (4) the theme of the national motto is as old as the republic itself;

10 (5) the Founding Fathers believed devotedly that there was a God and that the
11 unalienable rights of man were rooted in Him, as evidenced in their writings from the
12 Mayflower Compact to the Constitution;

13 (6) the signers of the Declaration of Independence appealed to the Supreme
14 Judge of the World for the rectitude of their intentions and avowed a firm reliance on the
15 protection of divine Providence for their cause;

1 (7) the national motto recognizes the historical fact that our nation was
2 believed to have been founded "under God";

3 (8) the national motto appears prominently engraved in the wall above the
4 speaker's dias in the chamber of the United States house of representatives, is displayed over
5 the entrance to the United States senate chamber, and is reproduced on every coin minted and
6 every dollar printed by the federal government; and

7 (9) on July 24, 2000, the United States house of representatives, by unanimous
8 consent, passed a resolution encouraging the display of the national motto in public buildings
9 throughout the nation.

10 (b) It is the purpose of this Act to

11 (1) symbolize the historical Judeo-Christian values and philosophical
12 underpinnings of the founding of the United States;

13 (2) foster patriotism, express confidence in the future, inculcate hope, instruct
14 in humility, acknowledge the historical role of faith in our society, and encourage the
15 recognition of what is worthy of appreciation in society; and

16 (3) honor those individuals who have made sacrifices for freedom.

17 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

18 **Sec. 14.03.065. Display of national motto.** The national motto "In God We
19 Trust" shall be displayed in public schools and public school entryways, classrooms,
20 libraries, and assembly areas as required under AS 35.05.070. If the public building is
21 located in a community where a majority of the residents are Alaska Natives, the
22 motto may be displayed in the local Native language.

23 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.40 is amended by adding a new section to read:

24 **Sec. 14.40.305. Display of national motto.** The national motto "In God We
25 Trust" shall be displayed in buildings, classrooms, libraries, and assembly areas of the
26 University of Alaska as required under AS 35.05.070. If the public building is located
27 in a community where a majority of the residents are Alaska Natives, the motto may
28 be displayed in the local Native language.

29 * **Sec. 4.** AS 35.05 is amended by adding a new section to read:

30 **Sec. 35.05.070. Display of national motto.** (a) The national motto "In God
31 We Trust" is authorized to be prominently and conspicuously displayed in public

1 buildings. If the public building is located in a community where a majority of the
2 residents are Alaska Natives, the motto may be displayed in the local Native language.

3 (b) The national motto display described in (a) of this section shall be

4 (1) engraved on a plaque made of permanent, non-porous material
5 such as wood, plastic, stone, metal plate, or framed in a glass or plastic-encased
6 picture frame; the plaque may not be smaller than 10" x 14"; the engraving on the
7 plaque shall be in the following form:

8 "IN GOD WE TRUST"

9 The National Motto of the United States of America

10 (2) at least twice the height and width of the letters in the phrase
11 "Motto of the United States of America"; the letters in each word of the phrase "The
12 Motto of the United States of America" shall be at least two inches high and one inch
13 wide; the plaque shall be engraved in a manner that may be easily read from a distance
14 of 20 feet;

15 (3) paid for with funds from private donations; public funds may not
16 be used to provide the national motto display described under this section.