

1 S.6

2 Introduced by Senator White

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Education; students; free expression

6 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to ensure that students are afforded  
7 freedom of expression within the public schools of the state.

8 An act relating to freedom of expression for public school students

9 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

10 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. chapter 43 is added to read:

11 CHAPTER 43. STUDENTS' RIGHTS

12 § 1631. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

13 (a) A public school student shall have freedom of expression in the public  
14 schools of the state, provided that such expression shall not cause any  
15 disruption or disorder within the school.

16 (b) Freedom of expression shall include the rights and responsibilities of  
17 students, collectively and individually, to express their views through speech  
18 and symbols; to write, publish, and disseminate their views; and to assemble  
19 peaceably on school property for the purpose of expressing their opinions.  
20 Any assembly planned by students during regularly scheduled school hours

1 shall be held only at a time and place approved in advance by the school  
2 principal or the principal's designee.

3 (c) Student expression protected by this section shall not be deemed to be  
4 an expression of school policy, and a parent, legal guardian, school district  
5 employee, school district official, or school district shall not be held liable in  
6 any civil or criminal action for that expression.

7 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

8 This act shall take effect on passage.