



EDUCATION

Religious speech on athletes' uniforms equals other speech

By Ty Tagami

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Legislation that bans Georgia public high schools from participating in an athletic association that prohibits religious expression on student athletic clothing has passed the General Assembly.

Senate Bill 309 now goes to Gov. Nathan Deal for his signature. It prohibits religious expression from being treated differently from other personal expression; if personal expression is allowed, then religious expression must be, too.

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It's aimed at the Georgia High School Association, whose officials testified against the legislation during committee hearings. The clothing requirements should have no immediate effect, since the GHSA currently bans personal expression on uniforms. But the bill also requires the GHSA to allow inter-association scrimmages, which currently are banned, though GHSA said it was in the process of relaxing that policy.

The bill by Sen. Burt Jones, R-Jackson, passed the state House Thursday after passing the Senate last month. A companion House bill is in a Senate committee.

About the Author



Ty Tagami



Ty Tagami is a staff writer for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Since joining the newspaper in 2002, he has written about everything from hurricanes to homelessness. He has deep experience covering local government and education, and can often be found under the Gold Dome when lawmakers meet or in a school somewhere in the state.

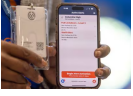
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