

1 any of that stuff.

2 I'm just trying -- if you're just -- if the
3 purpose of your bill is you're just trying to do the
4 religious part of it, I understand that. If the purpose
5 of your bill was to mirror the federal pledge to the --
6 the pledge to the national flag, to the Star Spangled
7 Banner, then it's not getting that because you're missing
8 an important part.

9 And so I just -- I want it to serve
10 whatever purpose you said that you think it's supposed to
11 serve.

12 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: Well, I didn't
13 think of the other, but our pledge is unique to Texas,
14 and I think that we -- we have it the way we want it.

15 But next session, if you would like to put
16 that in it, then I welcome you to do that.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HOCHBERG: Okay, but why was
18 this part a priority?

19 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: I think I shared
20 that last night.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HOCHBERG: Well, I'm sorry.
22 It was late last night, and it's hard to hear back here
23 and it's hard -- you have a -- you have a soft voice and
24 sort of a smooth voice. It makes it very hard for me to
25 hear back here, so --

1 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: Well, I'll tell you
2 what. I'm a horse woman. I live on 16 acres. I can
3 holler from my house to the barn and have all the horses
4 hear me. So I can raise my voice.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HOCHBERG: We should
6 probably -- we should probably do this without
7 microphones. I'd probably hear you better than with the
8 sound --

9 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: It kind of -- it
10 kind of tends to echo; does it not?

11 REPRESENTATIVE HOCHBERG: I'm sorry.

12 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: Yes.

13 REPRESENTATIVE HOCHBERG: Okay.

14 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: I think I made my
15 point very clear last night, and I think I've made my
16 point clear today.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HOCHBERG: And your point is
18 that the "under God" part is what you think is important
19 to move over?

20 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: That is what that
21 we put in there, sir. It mirrors the national pledge.

22 It's a very simple concept, and I really
23 feel like that it's being redundant to have to say that
24 over and over.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HOCHBERG: Thank you. I

1 never mean to make anybody be redundant. Thank you,
2 ma'am.

3 THE SPEAKER: Representative Hilderbran,
4 what purpose?

5 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: The lady yield
6 for --

7 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: Move passage.

8 THE SPEAKER: (inaudible) yield?
9 Representative Riddle, do you yield?

10 Representative Hilderbran, the lady has
11 yielded the floor. Anyone wish to speak for or against?

12 Representative Burnam. Mr. Bolton --
13 Representative Bolton. Ms. Bolton. The Chair recognize
14 Ms. Bolton to speak against the bill.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BOLTON: Mr. Speaker,
16 Members, I wanted to vote -- to speak against this bill.

17 I am and have been a Baptist all my life,
18 and the concepts of religious liberty and the separation
19 of church and state are firmly engrained in every fiber
20 of my being.

21 In fact, the first version of our national
22 pledge of allegiance was written in 1892 by a Baptist
23 minister to celebrate the 400th-year anniversary of
24 Columbus coming to America.

25 It would have never occurred to him as a

1 Baptist minister to insert the words "under God" into a
2 pledge to a national secular symbol.

3 Roger Williams, who lived in the 1600s, is
4 widely viewed as the father of Baptist life in America.
5 He gave up a very powerful position in England and came
6 to the colonies fleeing religious persecution.

7 However, even in the colonies he faced
8 persecution because he wouldn't worship as the leaders
9 prescribed. In fact, late in his life he was banished to
10 an uninhabited island and expected to die there.

11 When, by God's grace, he prospered there on
12 that uninhabited island, the leader of the colony that
13 banished him sent him a scathing letter demanding to know
14 why he hadn't just gone ahead and died as expected.

15 Roger Williams risked everything for what
16 he believed. I have not been asked to risk as much, but
17 my belief in religious liberty is that it is worth
18 fighting for.

19 It would be very easy to vote yes on this
20 bill to avoid being seen as voting against God, but I am
21 very confident in my Christian faith and my relationship
22 with God, so I will be voting no on this bill and voting
23 for religious freedom.

24 Thank you.

25 THE SPEAKER: Mr. Hilderbran, and then

1 immediately preceding Mr. Hilderbran, Mr. Burnam.

2 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: Mr. Speaker,
3 Members, I rise in favor of this bill, and I just want to
4 share with the -- with the membership in the committee.

5 We worked on this bill a number of weeks.
6 We considered whether we were trying -- whether it was an
7 attempt to rewrite the pledge to the Texas flag or
8 whether we were just adding the words "God," and we
9 decided as a committee to keep it unique, to just adding
10 "God" and not rewriting the pledge.

11 And I'm slowing down here because Ms.
12 Thompson wants to ask me a question.

13 THE SPEAKER: Ms. Thompson, for what
14 purpose?

15 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Will the
16 gentleman yield?

17 THE SPEAKER: Mr. Hilderbran, do you yield?

18 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: I yield.

19 THE SPEAKER: The gentleman yields.

20 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Mr. Hilderbran, I
21 was listening to Representative Riddle's explanation for
22 the bill, and she said she wanted to mirror the national
23 pledge; and then when she was asked to put in "and
24 justice for all," which is in the national pledge -- I'm
25 a little baffled, since she wants to mirror the national

1 pledge, as to why she would leave that -- want to leave
2 that out and refuse to place that in.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: I can't speak
4 for her specifically to that, but I can tell you that the
5 committee looked at it and we were even discussing
6 whether or not that we should keep the word
7 "indivisible," because, you know, the truth is, the state
8 does have the right to divide up (inaudible) from our
9 Texas history.

10 We discussed whether we should change some
11 other words and amend the bill, but we decided that we
12 were trying to follow the spirit of.

13 And the fact that "in God we trust" has
14 been brought up at the beginning of the session by
15 Richard Raymond, that in the national media the last
16 couple of years about whether we should keep God --
17 "under God" in the national pledge and that we were
18 reaffirming that Texas -- that the state of Texas and
19 Texans believe in that and that we wanted our pledge to
20 have "under God."

21 And so we resisted making any other changes
22 and ended up passing our bill out as it was introduced.

23 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: But don't you
24 think Texas believes in justice for all?

25 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: I do.

1 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Then why -- why
2 would we want to -- why would not we want to also
3 demonstrate "and justice for all"?

4 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: Had that been
5 raised -- had that been raised in the committee, which it
6 wasn't, and we raised -- we talked about different
7 things. We did not just kick the bill out. It stayed in
8 committee for at least two weeks and maybe more. And so
9 there was plenty of time for input to come to us, but it
10 didn't -- it didn't happen.

11 But we discussed whether we should amend
12 more than just this one thing the bill proposed do, and
13 we decided as a committee to only make that one change.

14 And that would be in her prerogative,
15 whether to accept that amendment; but we did discuss it
16 and decided at that time, without that idea being raised,
17 but decided after looking at other ideas that we didn't
18 want to make any change but add "God."

19 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: And, you know,
20 since God is a god of justice for all, I mean, why would
21 we want to have that associated with him?

22 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: I don't -- I
23 certainly wouldn't.

24 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Since it is --
25 since it is in God whom we trust?

1 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: I do not
2 disagree with you. What I want to say, though, is, there
3 was a discussion about whether we should rewrite the
4 Texas pledge just a couple of years after we had just
5 introduced it to the school children of Texas and has
6 just now become a customary practice in schools every
7 morning to do the Texas pledge, just as we've added it in
8 this body as we open our session each morning. And we
9 just, quite frankly, learned it.

10 I mean, I remember the first few -- year or
11 so, first year or two that I was bringing my card with me
12 when I was at meetings that we did it so I would know it,
13 and now I've got it down.

14 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Representative
15 Hilderbran --

16 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: -- just like I
17 got the national pledge down.

18 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Representative --

19 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: And we
20 discussed that, and we said, well, maybe we shouldn't be
21 rewriting it.

22 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Representative --

23 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: We just learned
24 it. And so we decided to add "under God" only, which we
25 thought would be easy to pick up on.

1 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: Representative
2 Hilderbran --

3 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: Yes, ma'am.

4 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: -- we ask
5 children to learn new things --

6 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: Every day.

7 REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON: -- all the time.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HILDERBRAN: Every day, yes,
9 ma'am.

10 THE SPEAKER: The Chair recognize
11 Representative Burnam.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BURNAM: Mr. Speaker,
13 Members, justice for all, not a bad concept. One that is
14 inclusive of everyone, a phrase that we could ask every
15 student in every school to say without violating their
16 own religious convictions.

17 But we've seen today the real purpose of
18 this bill. It's not to create a parallel pledge, and
19 it's certainly not to promote justice for all. It is to
20 promote one religious perspective that is exclusive. It
21 is noninclusive, just like most of the prayers offered on
22 this house floor.

23 I can, on a regular basis, refuse to come
24 to this house floor until I know who's going to offer the
25 prayer and I know whether or not it's going to be

1 inclusive, but no school child has that same opportunity.

2 I simply want to close with my opposition
3 with two quotes from two Supreme Court justices. Justice
4 Stevens has said the First Amendment embraces the right
5 to select any religious faith or none at all.

6 And with regards to Ms. Riddle's enthusiasm
7 for the notion that a hundred of you have signed onto
8 this bill, I want to remind you of the words of Justice
9 Sandra Day O'Connor. We do not count heads before
10 enforcing the First Amendment.

11 I urge you to vote for religious freedom or
12 to remove the requirement that school children in Texas
13 have to say the pledge of allegiance to the Texas flag.
14 Vote no on this bill.

15 THE SPEAKER: The Chair recognize Ms.
16 Riddle to close.

17 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: Thank you, Mr.
18 Speaker. Move passage.

19 THE SPEAKER: First question (inaudible)
20 the final passage of House Bill 1034. All those vote
21 aye, all those vote no. Clerk, ring the bell.

22 Have all voted. Being 124 ayes, 12 nays,
23 two present not voting, House Bill 1034 is finally
24 passed.

25 THE DOORKEEP: Mr. Speaker?

1 THE SPEAKER: Mr. Doorkeep, for what
2 purpose?

3 THE DOORKEEP: I have a messenger from the
4 Senate at the door of the House.

5 THE SPEAKER: Admit the messenger.

6 Sir, I want to know, is the Senate meeting
7 today?

8 SENATE MESSENGER: Yes, sir.

9 THE SPEAKER: Great.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BURNAM: Mr. Speaker?

11 THE SPEAKER: Mr. Burnam, for what purpose?

12 REPRESENTATIVE BURNAM: May I request the
13 remarks between Representative Hochberg and
14 Representative Riddle be reduced to writing and the
15 closing comments be reduced to writing in house journal?

16 THE SPEAKER: Members, you've heard the
17 motion. Is there objections? Chair hears no objections.

18 REPRESENTATIVE BURNAM: Thank you.

19 THE SPEAKER: The Chair recognize Mr.
20 Hughes for recognition.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HUGHES: Thank you, Mr.
22 Speaker.

23 Members, visiting with us today in the east
24 gallery are some folks I want to draw your attention to.
25 Many of you have met Sarah Fox, who's been an intern in

1 our office this session. Sarah's about to graduate from
2 Southwestern University and going to law school, getting
3 married this summer. She's here with -- and she's also a
4 former Miss Dallas, by the way. She's here with her
5 mother, Karen Fox, who's a teacher at Quitman Elementary
6 School.

7 Would you guys please stand so we can
8 recognize you.

9 Members, please help me welcome my friends
10 from my home county.

11 * * * * *

12 THE SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Ms.
13 Riddle.

14 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: I call up House
15 Bill 1034 with senate amendments.

16 THE SPEAKER: Chair lays out House Bill
17 1034.

18 Clerk, read the bill.

19 THE CLERK: HB 1034, by Riddle, relating to
20 the pledge of allegiance to the state flag.

21 THE SPEAKER: Chair recognizes Ms. Riddle.

22 REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE: Members, if you
23 remember, we added "under God" to our state flag. The
24 Senate added just one word. Let me tell you the final
25 version. Honor the Texas flag. I pledge allegiance to

1 thee, Texas, one state under God, one and indivisible.
2 That's it.

3 I move to concur.

4 THE SPEAKER: Ms. Riddle moves to concur
5 with the senate amendments for House Bill 1034. It is a
6 record vote. And will the clerk -- clerk, ring the bell.

7 Show Ms. Riddle voting aye. Show Mr.
8 Eiland voting aye. Show Mr. Naishtat voting aye.

9 All members voted? All members?

10 There being 142 ayes, one nay, one present
11 not voting, House Bill 1034 is finally passed.

12 The Chair recognizes Mr. Keffer.

13 MR. KEFFER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I
14 call up House Bill 1921 with a senate amendment.

15 *(End of audio.)*

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1 STATE OF TEXAS)

2 COUNTY OF TARRANT)

3

4 I, LEAH K. OSTEEEN-DOW, Certified Shorthand Reporter,
5 duly qualified in and for the State of Texas, certify
6 that the foregoing transcript was transcribed by me and
7 that the transcript is a true record of the proceedings
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9 I further certify that I am neither counsel
10 for, nor related to, any party in this cause and am not
11 financially interested in its outcome.

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day of October, 2007.

16

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