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MEMORANDUM

To: Chairman Brunk
Members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

From: Jason B. Long, Senior Assistant Revisor

Date: March 30, 2015

Subject: SB 175 – Exercise of religious freedom by student associations.

Senate Bill No. 175 prohibits the denial of student association benefits on the basis of membership requirements that involve sincerely held religious beliefs. Under Section 2 of the bill, a public university or college could not deny benefits to a religious student association that are otherwise available to other student associations solely because the religious student association requires its members and leaders to adhere to or comply with the association's sincerely held religious beliefs. Those benefits include recognition and registration by the university or college, use of facilities, use of means of communication, and funding.

If a student or student association believes that a university or college has acted in violation of Section 2, then under Section 3 the student or association may file a lawsuit against the university or college for damages.

If enacted, SB 175 would become effective on July 1, 2015.