

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4403

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for a civics and history education program.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 14, 2022

Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KENNEDY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for a civics and history education program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “USA Civics Act of
5 2022”.

6 **SEC. 2. USA CIVICS ACT.**

7 Section 805 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
8 U.S.C. 1161e) is amended—

1 (1) in the section heading, by striking “**HIS-**
2 **TORY FOR FREEDOM**” and inserting “**CIVICS**
3 **AND HISTORY EDUCATION PROGRAM**”;

4 (2) in subsection (a)—

5 (A) by striking “subsection (f)” and insert-
6 ing “subsection (g)”;

7 (B) by striking “the Secretary is author-
8 ized to award three-year grants, on a competi-
9 tive basis,” and inserting “the Secretary is au-
10 thorized to award grants, at the Secretary’s dis-
11 cretion but not less frequently than once every
12 3 years and on a competitive basis,”;

13 (C) by striking paragraph (1) and insert-
14 ing the following:

15 “(1) American political thought and history;”;

16 and

17 (D) by striking paragraph (3) and insert-
18 ing the following:

19 “(3) the history, achievements, and impact of
20 American representative democracy and constitu-
21 tional democracies globally.”;

22 (3) in subsection (b)—

23 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “as de-
24 fined in section 101.” and inserting “, or a
25 partnership that includes an institution of high-

1 er education and one or more nonprofit organi-
2 zations, whose missions and demonstrated ex-
3 pertise are consistent with the purpose of this
4 section.”;

5 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “that
6 emerged” and all that follows through the pe-
7 riod at the end and inserting “founded on the
8 principles of representative democracy, constitu-
9 tional government, individual rights, market ec-
10 nomics, religious freedom and religious toler-
11 ance, and freedom of thought and inquiry.”;
12 and

13 (C) by striking paragraph (3) and insert-
14 ing the following:

15 “(3) AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND HIS-
16 TORY.—The term ‘American political thought and
17 history’ means—

18 “(A) the significant constitutional, polit-
19 ical, intellectual, economic, social, and foreign
20 policy trends and issues that have shaped the
21 course of American history; and

22 “(B) the key episodes, turning points,
23 texts, and figures involved in the constitutional,
24 political, intellectual, diplomatic, social, and
25 economic history of the United States.”;

1 (4) in subsection (c)(2)—

2 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “tra-
3 ditional” and all that follows through the semi-
4 colon and inserting “American political thought
5 and history, free institutions, or the impact of
6 American representative democracy and con-
7 stitutional democracies globally;” and

8 (B) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “,
9 which may include the creation or use of open
10 educational resources” after “subsection
11 (e)(1)(B)”;

12 (5) in subsection (d)—

13 (A) by striking paragraph (1) and insert-
14 ing the following:

15 “(1) increase access to quality programming
16 that expands knowledge of American political
17 thought and history, free institutions, or the impact
18 of American representative democracy and constitu-
19 tional democracies globally;” and

20 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “tradi-
21 tional American history, free institutions, or
22 Western civilization” and inserting “American
23 political thought and history, free institutions,
24 the impact of American representative democ-
25 racy and constitutional democracies globally, or

1 the means of participation in political and civic
2 life.”;

3 (6) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the
4 following:

5 “(e) USE OF FUNDS.—

6 “(1) REQUIRED USE OF FUNDS.—Funds pro-
7 vided under this section shall be used—

8 “(A) for collaboration with local edu-
9 cational agencies for the purpose of providing
10 elementary school and secondary school teach-
11 ers an opportunity to enhance their knowledge
12 of American political thought and history, free
13 institutions, or the impact of American rep-
14 resentative democracy and constitutional de-
15 mocracies globally; and

16 “(B) to carry out one or more of the fol-
17 lowing:

18 “(i) Establishing or strengthening
19 academic programs or centers focused on
20 American political thought and history,
21 free institutions, or the impact of Amer-
22 ican representative democracy and con-
23 stitutional democracies globally, which may
24 include—

1 “(I) design and implementation
2 of programs of study, courses, lecture
3 series, seminars, and symposia;

4 “(II) development, publication,
5 and dissemination of instructional ma-
6 terials;

7 “(III) research;

8 “(IV) support for faculty teach-
9 ing in undergraduate and, if applica-
10 ble, graduate programs; or

11 “(V) support for graduate and
12 postgraduate fellowships, if applicable.

13 “(ii) For teacher preparation initia-
14 tives that stress content mastery regarding
15 American political thought and history,
16 free institutions, or the impact of Amer-
17 ican representative democracy and con-
18 stitutional democracies globally.

19 “(iii) To conduct outreach activities to
20 ensure that information about the activi-
21 ties funded under this section is widely dis-
22 seminated—

23 “(I) to undergraduate students
24 (including students enrolled in teacher
25 education programs, if applicable);

1 “(II) to graduate students (in-
2 cluding students enrolled in teacher
3 education programs, if applicable);

4 “(III) to faculty;

5 “(IV) to local educational agen-
6 cies; and

7 “(V) within the local community.

8 “(2) ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS.—Funds
9 provided under this section may be used to sup-
10 port—

11 “(A) collaboration with entities such as—

12 “(i) nonprofit organizations whose
13 missions and demonstrated expertise are
14 consistent with the purpose of this section,
15 for assistance in carrying out activities de-
16 scribed under subsection (a); and

17 “(ii) Federal or State humanities pro-
18 grams, which may include those funded by
19 the National Endowment for the Human-
20 ities; and

21 “(B) the creation and use of open edu-
22 cational resources on American political thought
23 and history, free institutions, or the impact of
24 American representative democracy and con-
25 stitutional democracies globally.”;

1 (7) by redesignating subsection (f) as sub-
2 section (g);

3 (8) in subsection (g), as redesignated by para-
4 graph (7), by striking “2009” and inserting “2022”;
5 and

6 (9) by inserting after subsection (e) the fol-
7 lowing:

8 “(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
9 tion shall be construed to authorize the Secretary to pre-
10 scribe an American political thought and history cur-
11 riculum.”.

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