

Calendar No. 640

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 860

[Report No. 109-348]

To amend the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act to require State academic assessments of student achievement in United States history and civics, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 20, 2005

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

SEPTEMBER 26, 2006

Reported by Mr. ENZI, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

A BILL

To amend the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act to require State academic assessments of student achievement in United States history and civics, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the "American History
3 Achievement Act".

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that—

6 (1) the 2001 National Assessment of Educational Progress assessment in United States history had the largest percentage of students scoring below basic of any subject that was tested, including mathematics, science, and reading;

11 (2) in the 2001 National Assessment of Educational Progress assessment in United States history—

14 (A) 33 percent of students in grade 4 scored below basic, 36 percent of students in grade 8 scored below basic, and 57 percent of students in grade 12 scored below basic;

18 (B) 92 percent of students in grade 12 could not explain the most important cause of the Great Depression after reading a paragraph delineating 4 significant reasons;

22 (C) 91 percent of students in grade 8 could not "list two issues that were important in causing the Civil War" and "list the Northern and Southern positions on each of these issues";

(D) 95 percent of students in grade 4 could not list "two reasons why the people we call 'pioneers' moved west across the United States";

5 (E) 73 percent of students in grade 4
6 could not identify the Constitution from among
7 4 choices as “the document that contains the
8 basic rules used to run the United States gov-
9 ernment”;

(F) 75 percent of students in grade 4 could not identify "the three parts of the federal (national) government of the United States" out of 4 possible choices;

(G) 94 percent of students in grade 8 could not "give two reasons why it can be useful for a country to have a constitution"; and

17 (H) 91 percent of students in grade 12
18 were unable to “explain two ways that demo-
19 cratic society benefits from citizens actively par-
20 ticipating in the political process”;

4 (5) the strength of American democracy and
5 our standing in the world depend on ensuring that
6 our children have a strong understanding of our Na-
7 tion's past.

8 SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF
9 EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AUTHORIZATION
10 ACT.

11 Section 303(b) of the National Assessment of Edu-
12 cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9622(b))
13 is amended—

18 (2) in paragraph (3)(A)—

19 (A) in clause (iii) —

20 (i) by inserting “except as provided in
21 clause (iv),” before “may conduct”, and

22 (ii) by striking “and” after the semi-
23 colon;

24 (B) by redesignating clause (iv) as clause
25 (v); and

1 (C) by inserting after clause (iii) the fol-
2 lowing:

3 “(iv) shall conduct trial State aca-
4 demic assessments of student achievement
5 in United States history in grades 8 and
6 12 in not less than 10 States representing
7 geographically diverse regions of the
8 United States and in civics in grades 8 and
9 12 in not less than 10 States representing
10 geographically diverse regions of the
11 United States (with a priority given to con-
12 ducting assessments in United States his-
13 tory); and”.

14 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD.**

15 Section 302(e)(1) of the National Assessment of
16 Educational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C.
17 9621(e)(1)) is amended—

18 (1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” after
19 the semicolon;

20 (2) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as sub-
21 paragraph (K);

22 (3) in the flush matter at the end, by striking
23 “subparagraph (J)” and inserting “subparagraph
24 (K)”; and

3 “(J) in consultation with the Commissioner
4 for Education Statistics, identify and select the
5 States that will participate in the trial State
6 academic assessments described in section
7 303(b)(3)(A)(iv); and”.

8 SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

9 Section 305 of the National Assessment of Edu-
10 cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9624) is
11 amended—

12 (1) by redesignating subsection (b) as sub-
13 section (c); and

14 (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
15 lowing:

16 "(b) HISTORY AND CIVICS ASSESSMENTS.—There
17 are authorized to be appropriated—

18 “(1) \$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2006
19 and 2007 to carry out sections 303(b)(3)(A)(iv) and
20 302(e)(1), of which not more than \$500,000 for
21 each fiscal year shall be available to carry out sec-
22 tion 302(e)(1); and

23 “(2) such sums as may be necessary to carry
24 out such sections for each succeeding fiscal year.”

1 **SEC. 6. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**

2 Section 113(a)(1) of the Education Sciences Reform
3 Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9513(a)(1)) is amended by strik-
4 ing “section 302(e)(1)(J)” and inserting “section
5 302(e)(1)(K)”.

6 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

7 *This Act may be cited as the “American History
8 Achievement Act”.*

9 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

10 *Congress finds that—*

11 *(1) the 2001 National Assessment of Educational
12 Progress assessment in United States history had the
13 largest percentage of students scoring below basic of
14 any subject that was tested, including mathematics,
15 science, and reading;*

16 *(2) in the 2001 National Assessment of Edu-
17 cational Progress assessment in United States his-
18 tory—*

19 *(A) 33 percent of students in grade 4 scored
20 below basic, 36 percent of students in grade 8
21 scored below basic, and 57 percent of students in
22 grade 12 scored below basic;*

23 *(B) 92 percent of students in grade 12 could
24 not explain the most important cause of the
25 Great Depression after reading a paragraph de-
26 lineating 4 significant reasons;*

(D) 95 percent of students in grade 4 could not list “two reasons why the people we call ‘pioneers’ moved west across the United States”;

(G) 94 percent of students in grade 8 could not “give two reasons why it can be useful for a country to have a constitution”; and

(H) 91 percent of students in grade 12 were unable to “explain two ways that democratic society benefits from citizens actively participating in the political process”;

1 *and to the principles of freedom, equality, justice, and*
2 *opportunity for all;*

3 *(4) an appreciation for the defining events in*
4 *our Nation's history can be a catalyst for civic in-*
5 *volvement; and*

6 *(5) the strength of American democracy and our*
7 *standing in the world depend on ensuring that our*
8 *children have a strong understanding of our Nation's*
9 *past.*

10 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF**
11 **EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AUTHORIZATION**
12 **ACT.**

13 *Section 303(b) of the National Assessment of Edu-*
14 *cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9622(b)) is*
15 *amended—*

16 *(1) in paragraph (2)(D), by inserting “(with a*
17 *priority in conducting assessments in United States*
18 *history not less frequently than once every 4 years)”*
19 *after “subject matter”; and*

20 *(2) in paragraph (3)(A)—*

21 *(A) in clause (iii)—*

22 *(i) by inserting “except as provided in*
23 *clause (iv),” before “may conduct”; and*

24 *(ii) by striking “and” after the semi-*
25 *colon;*

3 (C) by inserting after clause (iii) the fol-
4 lowing:

18 SEC. 4. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD.

19 Section 302(e)(1) of the National Assessment of Edu-
20 cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9621(e)(1))
21 is amended—

22 (1)

23 *the semicolon;*

24 (z) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as sub-
25 paragraph (K);

4 (4) by inserting after subparagraph (I) the fol-
5 lowing:

6 “(J) in consultation with the Commissioner
7 for Education Statistics, identify and select the
8 States that will participate in the trial State
9 academic assessments described in section
10 303(b)(3)(A)(iv); and”.

11 SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

12 *Section 305 of the National Assessment of Educational
13 Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9624) is amended—
14 (1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection
15 (c); and*

16 (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
17 lowing:

18 "(b) UNITED STATES HISTORY AND CIVICS ASSESS-
19 MENTS.—

20 “(1) *IN GENERAL*.—In addition to amounts oth-
21 erwise appropriated under subsection (a)(1)(2), there
22 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out sec-
23 tions 303(b)(3)(A)(iv) and 302(e)(1)—

1 “(A) \$8,500,000 for the fiscal year pre-
2 ceding the conduct of the first trial assessment
3 described in section 303(b)(3)(A)(iv);

4 “(B) \$8,500,000 for the fiscal year during
5 which the first trial assessment described in sec-
6 tion 303(b)(3)(A)(iv) is conducted; and

7 “(C) such sums as may be necessary for
8 each fiscal year succeeding the fiscal year de-
9 scribed in subparagraph (B).

10 “(2) *AMOUNTS FOR THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT*
11 *GOVERNING BOARD.*—*From the amounts made avail-
12 able under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph
13 (1), not more than \$500,000 shall be available for
14 each fiscal year to carry out section 302(e)(1).*”.

15 **SEC. 6. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**

16 Section 113(a)(1) of the *Education Sciences Reform*
17 *Act of 2002* (20 U.S.C. 9513(a)(1)) is amended by striking
18 “section 302(e)(1)(J)” and inserting “section
19 302(e)(1)(K)”.

Calendar No. 640

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 860

[Report No. 109-348]

A BILL

To amend the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act to require State academic assessments of student achievement in United States history and civics, and for other purposes.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2006

Reported with an amendment