

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3953

To authorize the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture to support African American history education programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. SANDERS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

A BILL

To authorize the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture to support African American history education programs, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “African American His-
5 tory Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY.—The term
9 “African American history” means the history of Af-

1 rican Americans, including the history of African
 2 peoples beginning in the African diaspora through
 3 the present day, that illuminates the passage to the
 4 Americas, slavery, abolition, reconstruction, and the
 5 civil rights movements. This history also includes a
 6 focus on the innovations and contributions of Afri-
 7 can Americans to society both past and present, and
 8 the impact of African Americans on the history and
 9 development of the United States.

10 (2) AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY EDUCATION
 11 PROGRAM.—The term “African American history
 12 education program” means an educational program
 13 relating to African American life, art, history, and
 14 culture, including programs—

15 (A) using digital, electronic, and inter-
 16 active technologies; and

17 (B) carried out in collaboration with ele-
 18 mentary schools, secondary schools, and post-
 19 secondary schools.

20 (3) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
 21 the Director of the National Museum of African
 22 American History and Culture.

23 (4) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “early childhood
 24 education program”, “elementary school”, “local
 25 educational agency”, and “secondary school” have

1 the meaning given such terms in section 8101 of the
2 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
3 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

4 **SEC. 3. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Director, in accordance with
6 any program of the National Museum of African American
7 History and Culture established before, on, or after the
8 date of the enactment of this Act, may use the funds ap-
9 propriated under section 6 to carry out any of the fol-
10 lowing activities at the discretion of the Director:

11 (1) Developing and making available accurate,
12 relevant, and accessible resources to promote the un-
13 derstanding of African American history, which may
14 include digital resources and other types of re-
15 sources, such as print resources and traveling exhibi-
16 tions.

17 (2) Through a social justice and anti-bias lens,
18 convening experts, providing opportunities for dis-
19 course, and engaging with the public through pro-
20 gramming, educational resources, and social media.

21 (3) Through a social justice and anti-bias lens,
22 increasing resource capacity, technical support, and
23 content creation to engage various audiences in per-
24 son and via online platforms.

1 (4) Creating, expanding, and disseminating
2 scholarly work through research, curricula, in-house
3 and traveling exhibitions, publications, and program-
4 ming.

5 (5) Providing language translation of the work
6 of the National Museum of African American His-
7 tory and Culture, including scholarly work, research,
8 traveling exhibitions, publications, programming,
9 pamphlets, and other information distributed about
10 activities funded under this Act.

11 (6) Expanding the collection acquisition and
12 collection access processes, including staffing, con-
13 servation, processing, and digitization.

14 (7) Augmenting one or more of the following
15 African American history education program activi-
16 ties:

17 (A) Development, dissemination, and im-
18 plementation of principles of sound pedagogy
19 for teaching about African American history.

20 (B) Provision of professional development,
21 such as through—

22 (i) local, regional, and national work-
23 shops;

24 (ii) teacher trainings or engagement
25 in conjunction with African American his-

1 tory education centers and other appro-
 2 priate partners;

3 (iii) engagement with—

4 (I) local educational agencies;
 5 and

6 (II) early childhood education
 7 programs, elementary schools, and
 8 secondary schools that are inde-
 9 pendent of any local educational agen-
 10 cy; and

11 (iv) operation and expansion of a
 12 teacher fellowship program to cultivate and
 13 support leaders in African American his-
 14 tory education.

15 (C) Engagement with State and local edu-
 16 cation leaders to encourage the adoption of re-
 17 sources supported under this Act into curricula
 18 across diverse disciplines.

19 (8) Creating, developing, implementing, repli-
 20 cating, or taking to scale entrepreneurial, evidence-
 21 based, field-initiated innovations for museum im-
 22 provement, and rigorously evaluating such innova-
 23 tions.

24 (b) ONLINE AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY EDU-
 25 CATION RESOURCES.—

1 (1) WEBSITE.—The Director may use the funds
2 appropriated under section 6 to develop and main-
3 tain on the website of the National Museum of Afri-
4 can American History and Culture content des-
5 ignated for educators, students, and families to im-
6 prove their awareness and understanding of African
7 American history.

8 (2) INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION.—The Direc-
9 tor may use such funds to distribute information
10 about the activities funded under this Act through
11 the website of the National Museum of African
12 American History and Culture, and may respond to
13 inquiries for supplementary information concerning
14 such activities.

15 (c) CONTINUATION OF ACTIVITIES.—To the extent
16 that the National Museum of African American History
17 and Culture is engaged in an activity described in sub-
18 section (a) or (b) on the date of the enactment of this
19 Act, the Director may use the funds appropriated under
20 section 6 to continue that activity.

21 **SEC. 4. ANNUAL REPORT AND BRIEFINGS.**

22 (a) REPORT.—Not later than February 1 of each
23 year, the Director shall submit to the Congress, and make
24 available to the public, a report describing how the funds
25 made available under this Act have been used—

1 (1) to create and promote educational activities;
2 and

3 (2) otherwise to carry out this Act.

4 (b) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 6 months after the
5 date on which funding is first distributed under this Act,
6 and annually thereafter, the Director or the Director's
7 designee shall brief the Committee on House Administra-
8 tion of the House of Representatives and the Committee
9 on Rules and Administration of the Senate on the pro-
10 grams and activities carried out under this Act.

11 (c) SUNSET.—Subsections (a) and (b) shall cease to
12 be effective on September 30, 2030.

13 **SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

14 It is the sense of Congress that—

15 (1) the significance of accurate education of the
16 history of minority groups in the United States
17 through a social justice and anti-bias lens should be
18 recognized, and the United States Federal Govern-
19 ment should strive for a leadership role in initiatives
20 aimed at improving the teaching of African Amer-
21 ican, Hispanic and Latino, Asian American and Pa-
22 cific Islander, and Native American history;

23 (2) the Director of the Smithsonian Museum of
24 the American Indian should be empowered to de-
25 velop and disseminate historically accurate materials

1 aimed at improving the teaching of Native American
2 history; and

3 (3) the Directors of the forthcoming Smithso-
4 nian American Women's History Museum and the
5 forthcoming Smithsonian National Museum of the
6 American Latino, as well as the directors of any fu-
7 ture Smithsonian Museums covering the history of
8 minority groups in the United States, should be em-
9 powered to create and disseminate quality education
10 materials in their areas of expertise.

11 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

12 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
13 this Act \$4,000,000 for fiscal year 2027 and each of the
14 4 succeeding fiscal years.

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