

Civics Secures Democracy Act

The Civics Secures Democracy (CSD) Act [H.R.1814] [S.4384] (*formerly known as the Educating for Democracy Act*) creates grants for states and districts to support and expand access to U.S. history and civics to meet the needs of today's students and our constitutional democracy.

Introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by: Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), and Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR). Introduced in the U.S. Senate by: Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE) and Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX).

The bill:

- Protects the health of our constitutional democracy by prioritizing American history and civics in our nation's schools
- Reverses chronic underinvestment by providing funding to states and school districts to support quality history and civic education that informs and empowers students to participate in our constitutional democracy
- Encourages more frequent and robust administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in history and civics, providing rich data on student outcomes for teachers, school districts and states
- Supports the Prince Hall Fellowship Program to strengthen our history and civics teaching corps and diversify the educator pipeline

Specifically, CSD provides for:

- **Grants to states** (\$585 million annually for five years) to support education in American civics and history. States receiving a grant must agree to participate in the NAEPs in civics and history and to the public release of disaggregated NAEP performance data. States that receive grants must use not less than 95% of the funds to make **subgrants to school districts** to assist local education agencies in carrying out programs to improve the achievement of elementary and secondary school students in the fields of American civics and history. Priority will be given to grant proposals focused on traditionally underserved populations.
- **Support for qualified nonprofit organizations** (\$200 million annually for five years), through competitive grants, to assist such organizations in developing or expanding access to civics curricula, instructional models, and other educational programs to enhance student knowledge and achievement in American civics and history in elementary schools and secondary schools. Priority will be given to grant proposals focused on traditionally underserved populations.
- **Resources for institutions of higher education** (\$150 million annually for five years), on a competitive basis, to assist such institutions in developing and implementing

programs to train elementary and secondary school teachers in methods for instructing and engaging students in American civics and history. Priority shall be given to applications proposing to address the specific needs of teachers working with traditionally underserved students. Thirty-five percent of these funds are designated for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Institutions of Higher Education.

- Qualified **researchers** (\$50 million annually for five years) may also receive competitive grants to research and evaluate (1) elementary and secondary school students' knowledge of American civics and history; and (2) effective instructional practices and educator professional development in the fields of American civics and history.
- The bill establishes a new fellowship program to **diversify the American History and Civics teaching corps** through the creation of the **Prince Hall Fellowship** (\$15 million annually for five years) and provides additional assistance to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the **James Madison Memorial Fellowship** (one-time appropriation of \$20 million) and **Harry S. Truman Scholarship** Programs (one-time appropriation of \$300 million).
- The entirety of the 'USA Civics Act' was incorporated into CSD as **Section 203**. Specifically, Section 203 renames the existing HEA (Higher Education Act) civics grant program (The American History for Freedom Act) as the "American civics education program," and recommends funding for the USA Civics Act and **Section 105**, 'Grants to Institutions of Higher Education' (see \$150 million appropriation mentioned above).
- This bill also directs the National Assessment Governing Board and the US Department of Education to Conduct the **National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEP)** tests in American History and Civics and Government, using a methodology sufficient to provide accurate, disaggregated, statistically significant State level data on student proficiency for every State, on student academic achievement in public and private elementary schools and secondary schools at least once every 2 years, in grades 4, 8, and 12 in civics and history.