

# Civics Secures Democracy Act

*Investing in Civic Education to Preserve America's Civic Strength*

## Civic Education and the Urgency of Now

While support for democracy as a concept remains high in the United States, an increasing number of Americans are open to nondemocratic alternatives.<sup>1</sup> Polarization has led to distrust of democratic institutions and an erosion of civic values and norms, which only fuels further politicization and polarization.<sup>2</sup> A decades-long marginalization<sup>3</sup> of civic education, demands stronger state policy and accompanying federal funding to states and districts to ensure that civic education—reimagined for American democracy—is prioritized in K–12 schools.

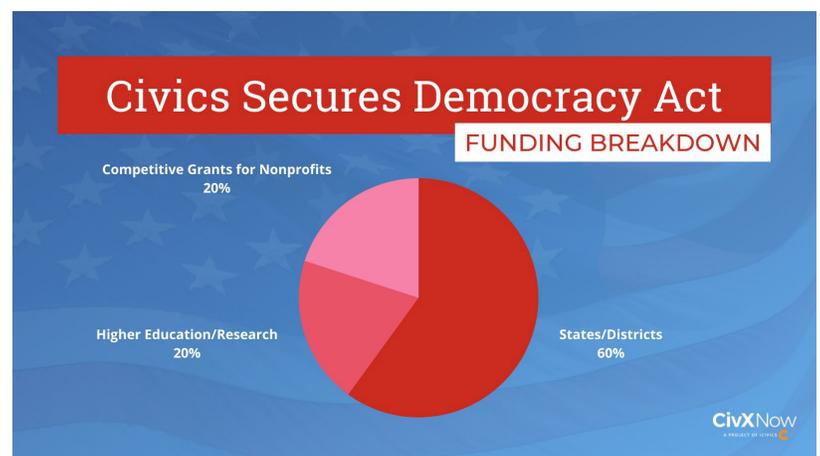
## Prioritizing Civics

The arms and space race of the 1950s provided a key “Sputnik Moment” for prioritizing and funding the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Today’s “Sputnik Moment” demands that same kind of investment in civic education. Currently, the federal government invests a mere 5 cents per K–12 student in civic education compared to 50 dollars per K–12 student for STEM.

## What Is the Civics Secures Democracy Act (H.R. 1814)?

**The bipartisan Civics Secures Democracy (CSD) Act would authorize \$1 billion annually over five years**, primarily to states and school districts. It also provides competitive grants to qualifying institutions of higher education, nonprofits, and researchers in their respective roles in advancing high-quality civics and history education in elementary and secondary schools.

Original Senate co-sponsors Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE) and Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) are joined in reintroduction by Sens. Angus King (I-ME), Mark Kelly (D-AZ), Jim Inhofe (R-OK), and Bill Cassidy (R-LA). **The bill has more than two dozen bipartisan cosponsors and is endorsed by nearly 200 organizations.**<sup>4</sup>



*This historic federal investment in K–12 civic education signifies its national prioritization to states, districts, and schools.*

**Sign On Today!** .....

**Questions?** Harper White in Rep. DeLauro’s office  
harper.white@mail.house.gov  
202-225-3661

Shane Hand in Rep. Cole’s office  
shane.hand@mail.house.gov  
202-225-6165



## What Does the Bill Do?

- ◆ Protects the health of our constitutional democracy by prioritizing American history and civics in our nation's schools
- ◆ 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
- ◆ 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 the nation's history and civics teaching corps and diversify the educator pipeline

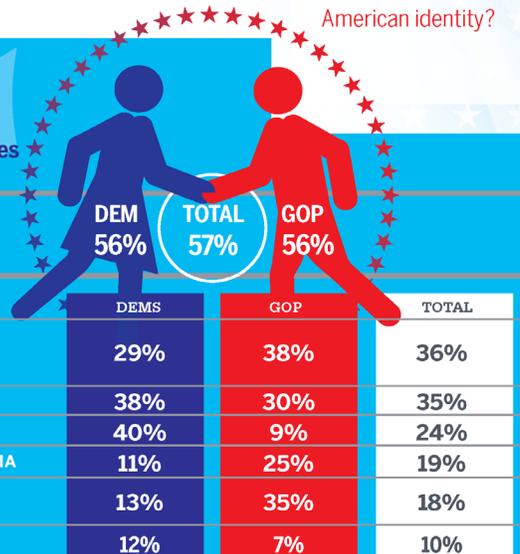
### Civic education has massive cross-partisan appeal as a solution to what ails our democracy.

The public overwhelmingly agrees that our country needs K-12 civic education. It's more than popular. It's more than bipartisan. Americans from all political stripes think civic education will have a more positive impact on strengthening our national common identity than all the other reforms tested.



Civic education is the clear winner, despite underlying partisan differences

#### CIVIC EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN K-12



Frank Luntz, 2020, Data from a representative sample of 1,000 likely voters in a nationwide survey of policy priorities, provided by the author, summarized in CivXNow Information Sheet, September 2020, [civxnow.org/sites/default/files/resources/CivXNow\\_infographic\\_-\\_Luntz\\_polling\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](https://civxnow.org/sites/default/files/resources/CivXNow_infographic_-_Luntz_polling_-_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center, "Globally, Broad Support for Representative and Direct Democracy: But many also endorse nondemocratic alternatives," October 2017, [pewresearch.org/global/2017/10/16/globally-broad-support-for-representative-and-direct-democracy](https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2017/10/16/globally-broad-support-for-representative-and-direct-democracy)

<sup>2</sup> More in Common, "Attitudes towards Democracy," July 2021, [moreincommon.com/our-work/publications](https://moreincommon.com/our-work/publications)

<sup>3</sup> Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), "The Marginalization of Social Studies," November 2018, [ccsso.org/resource-library/marginalization-social-studies](https://ccsso.org/resource-library/marginalization-social-studies); NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress), *The Nation's Report Card: 2018 U.S. History, Geography, and Civics at Grade 8*, National Center for Education Statistics, Report #2020017, April 23, 2020, [nationsreportcard.gov/geography/supporting\\_files/2018\\_SS\\_infographic.pdf](https://nationsreportcard.gov/geography/supporting_files/2018_SS_infographic.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [civxnow.org/our-work/federal/supporters](https://civxnow.org/our-work/federal/supporters); CivXNow is a coalition of more than 230 partner organizations from diverse viewpoints working to elevate civic education and engagement as a national priority in order to sustain and strengthen U.S. constitutional democracy.