

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6971

To establish a commission to promote information and media literacy, and
for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 8, 2022

Mr. BEYER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish a commission to promote information and media
literacy, 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Educating Against Misinformation and Disinformation
6 Act”.

7 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—COMMISSION TO SUPPORT INFORMATION AND MEDIA
LITERACY AND ADDRESS MISINFORMATION AND
DISINFORMATION

Sec. 101. Establishment and duties.

Sec. 102. Membership.

Sec. 103. Hearings.

Sec. 104. Commission personnel matters.

Sec. 105. National strategy for information and media literacy and preventing
misinformation and disinformation.

Sec. 106. Report to Congress.

Sec. 107. Authorization of appropriations.

TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Sec. 201. Grants to improve the American public's information and media literacy and resilience to misinformation and disinformation.

Sec. 202. Study and report on information and media literacy among the American public.

Sec. 203. Department of Education assessment.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
4 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
5 mittees” means—

6 (A) the Committee on Health, Education,
7 Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on
8 Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the
9 Senate; and

10 (B) the Committee on Education and
11 Labor and the Committee on Science, Space,
12 and Technology of the House of Representa-
13 tives.

14 (2) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary
15 school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary

1 school”, and “State educational agency” have the
2 meanings given those terms in the Elementary and
3 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801
4 et seq.).

5 (3) INFORMATION LITERACY.—The term “infor-
6 mation literacy” means the integrated set of skills,
7 knowledge, practices, and dispositions that prepares
8 individuals to discover, interpret, and create infor-
9 mation ethically while gaining a critical under-
10 standing of how information systems interact to
11 produce and circulate news, information and knowl-
12 edge (including digital information such as website
13 and social media content).

14 (4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
15 term “institution of higher education” has the
16 meaning given that term in section 101 of the High-
17 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

18 (5) MEDIA LITERACY.—The term “media lit-
19 eracy” means the ability to access, analyze, evaluate,
20 and participate in the creation and circulation of
21 media messages regardless of format, including
22 learning the skills and dispositions to seek out, criti-
23 cally evaluate, and create media messages and un-
24 derstand the role of media and algorithmic informa-
25 tion systems in society.

1 (6) SOCIAL MEDIA.—The term “social media”
2 means forms of interactive, internet-based applica-
3 tions (such as websites for social networking and
4 microblogging) through which users create online
5 communities to share information, ideas, personal
6 messages, and other content (such as videos).

7 (7) STATE HIGHER EDUCATION AGENCY.—The
8 term “State higher education agency” has the mean-
9 ing given that term in section 103 of the Higher
10 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

11 **TITLE I—COMMISSION TO SUP-**
12 **PORT INFORMATION AND**
13 **MEDIA LITERACY AND AD-**
14 **DRESS MISINFORMATION**
15 **AND DISINFORMATION**

16 **SEC. 101. ESTABLISHMENT AND DUTIES.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a com-
18 mission to be known as the “Commission to Support In-
19 formation and Media Literacy and Prevent Misinforma-
20 tion and Disinformation” (referred to in this Act as the
21 “Commission”).

22 (b) DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.—The duties of the
23 Commission are as follows:

24 (1) Identify and assess programs and inter-
25 disciplinary resources relating to information and

1 media literacy in elementary, secondary, higher edu-
2 cation, and adult education programs, including
3 by—

4 (A) identifying and assessing programs
5 and other educational materials made available
6 by the Federal Government;

7 (B) developing metrics to report on the
8 status of information and media literacy edu-
9 cation in elementary, secondary, higher, and
10 public informal education;

11 (C) requesting that the Public Library
12 Survey of the Institute of Museum and Library
13 Services continue to collect such data on an on-
14 going basis; and

15 (D) annually reporting on the status of
16 such efforts.

17 (2) Develop and regularly update, not less fre-
18 quently than annually, a national strategy to pro-
19 mote information and media literacy in accordance
20 with section 105 and coordinate the implementation
21 of such strategy.

22 (3) Report on how information on the internet
23 and social media is created and consumed, with a
24 particular focus on how disinformation and misin-
25 formation are spread.

1 (4) Develop age-appropriate materials to pro-
2 mote information and media literacy and education
3 with a particular focus on misinformation and
4 disinformation and disseminate such materials to the
5 public.

6 (5) Assess and report on strategies and tech-
7 niques to help students and the public at large judge
8 the trustworthiness and reliability of information
9 and images.

10 (6) Promote information and media literacy and
11 related educational efforts and materials at the
12 State and local levels, including by promoting part-
13 nerships among Federal, State, and local govern-
14 ments and nonprofit organizations with recognized
15 expertise in media literacy. These efforts include
16 misinformation and disinformation educational and
17 media literacy campaigns for the public.

18 (7) Make recommendations to the appropriate
19 congressional committees and the Secretary of Edu-
20 cation.

21 (c) AREAS OF EMPHASIS.—In carrying out the duties
22 specified in subsection (b), the Commission shall seek to—

23 (1) increase public awareness of and education
24 on—

1 (A) how to find and identify if information
2 is from a trustworthy source;

3 (B) how to craft arguments, when claims
4 are supported by evidence, and how to analyze
5 the validity of claims and strength of arguments
6 being made;

7 (C) methods to understand the difference
8 between fact or opinion or a mixture thereof;

9 (D) methods to identify misinformation
10 and disinformation;

11 (E) how to find and evaluate context for
12 information from different sources;

13 (F) how to detect manipulation of images
14 or information on digital platforms; and

15 (G) how influencers and various organiza-
16 tions target and manipulate audiences through
17 digital platforms;

18 (2) improve information and media literacy and
19 education by encouraging individuals to develop re-
20 lated skills, including—

21 (A) critical thinking skills, including how
22 to identify the difference between credible and
23 noncredible claims and information;

1 (B) awareness of the impact of
2 disinformation and misinformation on individ-
3 uals and society;

4 (C) increased familiarity and facility with
5 new and digital media with a particular empha-
6 sis on techniques individuals may use to—

7 (i) find reliable and trustworthy infor-
8 mation sources; and

9 (ii) identify how information can be
10 manipulated for the consumer; and

11 (D) encourage habits that support the mo-
12 tivation to learn based on verifiably true facts
13 when engaging with information sources; and

14 (3) improve information and media literacy and
15 resilience to misinformation and disinformation
16 among students attending elementary schools, sec-
17 ondary schools, institutions of higher education, and
18 adult education institutions.

19 (d) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the duties
20 under subsection (b), the Commission shall actively con-
21 sult with experts in media and information literacy and
22 experts in misinformation and disinformation, State and
23 local educational agencies, and State higher education
24 agencies as determined appropriate by the Commission.

1 (e) PERIODIC STUDIES.—The Commission may con-
2 duct periodic studies regarding the status of information
3 and media literacy and educational resources in the
4 United States, as the Commission determines appropriate.

5 (f) MATERIALS IN OTHER LANGUAGES.—The Com-
6 mission may take such steps as are appropriate to support
7 the development of information and media literacy and
8 education materials in languages other than English.

9 **SEC. 102. MEMBERSHIP.**

10 (a) MEMBERSHIP.—The Commission shall be com-
11 posed of the following members:

12 (1) The Secretary of Education, or the Sec-
13 retary's designee.

14 (2) The Director of the Institute of Museum
15 and Library Sciences, or the Director's designee.

16 (3) The Chairman of the Federal Communica-
17 tions Commission, or the Chair's designee.

18 (4) The Chair of the Federal Trade Commis-
19 sion, or the Chair's designee.

20 (5) The Secretary of the Department of Health
21 and Human Services, or the Secretary's designee.

22 (6) Not fewer than seven experts, selected by
23 the Secretary of Education, who represent diverse
24 populations in the field of information and media lit-
25 eracy, including experts such as—

1 (A) members of the International Commu-
2 nication Association and Association for Edu-
3 cation in Journalism and Mass Communication;
4 and

5 (B) experts cited in relevant professional
6 journals such as “First Monday, Journal of In-
7 formation Literacy”, and “Communications in
8 Information Literacy”.

9 (b) ALTERNATES.—Each member of the Commission
10 may designate an alternate if the member is unable to at-
11 tend a meeting of the Commission. Such alternate shall
12 be an individual who exercises significant decision-making
13 authority in the organization of the member, as deter-
14 mined by the member concerned.

15 (c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary of Education or
16 the Secretary’s designee shall serve as the Chairperson of
17 the Commission.

18 (d) MEETINGS.—

19 (1) FREQUENCY.—The Commission shall meet
20 at the call of the Chairperson—

21 (A) not less frequently than once every 4
22 months during the period of one year following
23 the date of the initial meeting of the Commis-
24 sion under subsection (f);

1 (B) not less frequently than biannually
2 after the expiration of such period; and

3 (C) at such other times as the Chairperson
4 determines appropriate to carry out this title.

5 (2) OPEN TO PUBLIC.—All meetings of the
6 Commission shall be open to the public.

7 (e) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the
8 Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser num-
9 ber of members may hold hearings.

10 (f) INITIAL MEETING.—The Commission shall hold
11 its first meeting not later than 60 days after the date of
12 enactment of this Act.

13 **SEC. 103. HEARINGS.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may hold such
15 hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such
16 testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission
17 considers appropriate to carry out this title.

18 (b) PARTICIPATION.—In hearings held under this
19 subsection, the Commission shall consider inviting wit-
20 nesses from—

21 (1) State and local educational agencies and
22 State higher education agencies with expertise in in-
23 formation or media literacy;

24 (2) recognized information or media literacy ex-
25 perts; and

1 (3) recognized experts in online hate,
2 disinformation, and misinformation.

3 **SEC. 104. COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.**

4 (a) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Each member of
5 the Commission shall serve without compensation. Mem-
6 bers of the Commission who are full-time officers or em-
7 ployees of the United States may not receive additional
8 pay, allowances, or benefits by reason of their service on
9 the Commission.

10 (b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the Com-
11 mission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per
12 diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with applicable
13 provisions subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United
14 States Code.

15 (c) DETAIL OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOY-
16 EES.—Any employee of the Federal Government may be
17 detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and
18 such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil
19 service status or privilege.

20 **SEC. 105. NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR INFORMATION AND**
21 **MEDIA LITERACY AND PREVENTING MISIN-**
22 **FORMATION AND DISINFORMATION.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall—

24 (1) not later than 18 months after the date of
25 enactment of this Act, develop a national strategy to

1 promote information and media literacy and resil-
2 ience to misinformation and disinformation among
3 the American public; and

4 (2) coordinate the efforts of the Federal Gov-
5 ernment to implement the strategy developed under
6 paragraph (1).

7 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy under subsection (a)
8 shall—

9 (1) be developed with the participation of State
10 and local governments (including State higher edu-
11 cation agencies), nonprofit organizations, and insti-
12 tutions of higher education;

13 (2) include strategies for—

14 (A) increasing the general information and
15 media literacy education level of the American
16 public;

17 (B) enhancing the public’s general under-
18 standing of how information platforms operate;
19 and

20 (C) encouraging members of the public to
21 critically analyze information sources and recog-
22 nize manipulation, misinformation, and
23 disinformation; and

24 (3) include an assessment of existing efforts to
25 promote information and media literacy and edu-

1 cation with a particular focus on misinformation and
2 disinformation.

3 (c) NATIONAL STRATEGY REVIEW.—On a periodic
4 basis at times determined appropriate by the Commission,
5 the Commission shall review the national strategy devel-
6 oped under subsection (b) and make such changes and rec-
7 ommendations as it determines necessary.

8 **SEC. 106. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after
10 the date of the first meeting of the Commission, and annu-
11 ally thereafter, the Commission shall submit to the appro-
12 priate congressional committees a report on the progress
13 of the Commission in carrying out this title.

14 (b) CONTENTS.—Each report required under sub-
15 section (a) shall include—

16 (1) a copy of the national strategy developed
17 under section 105;

18 (2) information concerning the implementation
19 of the duties of the Commission;

20 (3) an assessment of the availability, utilization,
21 and effectiveness of existing information and media
22 literacy and educational materials;

23 (4) a brief summary of the information and
24 media literacy and education materials and data re-

1 garding the dissemination and impact of such mate-
2 rials;

3 (5) a brief summary of any hearings conducted
4 by the Commission, including a list of witnesses who
5 testified at such hearings;

6 (6) information about any activities of the Com-
7 mission planned for the year following the date of
8 the report; and

9 (7) such other information as the Commission
10 determines appropriate.

11 **SEC. 107. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

12 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
13 as may be necessary to carry out this title.

14 **TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF**
15 **EDUCATION ACTIVITIES**

16 **SEC. 201. GRANTS TO IMPROVE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC'S**
17 **INFORMATION AND MEDIA LITERACY AND**
18 **RESILIENCE TO MISINFORMATION AND**
19 **DISINFORMATION.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning after the Commission
21 completes the development of the national strategy under
22 section 105, the Secretary of Education shall carry out
23 a program under which the Secretary awards grants, on
24 a competitive basis, to one or more qualified nonprofit or-
25 ganizations, including institutions of higher education, to

1 develop educational materials, multimedia awareness cam-
2 paigns, and programming to support information and
3 media literacy and to combat misinformation and
4 disinformation for the greater American public.

5 (b) RELATIONSHIP TO COMMISSION ACTIVITIES.—

6 The Secretary of Education shall carry out the grant pro-
7 gram under this section in a manner that reflects the find-
8 ings of the Commission with respect to—

9 (1) supporting public awareness of information
10 and media literacy;

11 (2) improving individual information and media
12 literacy skills;

13 (3) improving how information and media lit-
14 eracy is addressed in educational settings; and

15 (4) improving the public’s resilience to misin-
16 formation and disinformation.

17 (c) MULTILINGUAL MATERIALS.—In carrying out the

18 program under subsection (a), the Secretary may award
19 grants for the development of educational materials,
20 multimedia awareness campaigns, and programming in
21 languages other than English as the Secretary determines
22 appropriate.

23 (d) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The Secretary shall

24 develop and implement a process to evaluate the effective-

ness of the activities carried out with grants under this section.

(e) REPORT.—On an annual basis during each year of the grant program under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the status of the program.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024.

**SEC. 202. STUDY AND REPORT ON INFORMATION AND
MEDIA LITERACY AMONG THE AMERICAN
PUBLIC.**

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Education shall conduct a study to evaluate the extent of information and media literacy among the American public.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall examine the extent of the American public’s knowledge and awareness of—

(1) how social media content is created;

(2) how members of the public make choices about information as they consume, create, and share it;

(3) how intermediary technologies for search and social sharing use algorithms and personal information to influence the circulation and amplifi-

1 cation or suppression of news, information, opinion,
2 and disinformation;

3 (4) methods to search and evaluate the reli-
4 ability of information;

5 (5) how news is gathered and reported and how
6 that process differs from opinion writing and infor-
7 mation presented in talk-show formats; and

8 (6) how disinformation and misinformation are
9 shared and circulated.

10 (c) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year
11 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
12 Education shall submit to the appropriate congressional
13 committees a report on the findings and conclusions the
14 study conducted under subsection (a), together with—

15 (1) recommendations for legislative or adminis-
16 trative action based on such study; and

17 (2) recommendations for improving information
18 and media literacy and resilience to misinformation
19 and disinformation among the American public.

20 **SEC. 203. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ASSESSMENT.**

21 (a) EFFECTIVENESS STUDY.—The Secretary of Edu-
22 cation shall conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of
23 the Commission in promoting information and media lit-
24 eracy and education in accordance with title I.

1 (b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 3 years
2 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Department
3 of Education shall submit to the appropriate congressional
4 committees a report on the results of the study conducted
5 under subsection (a).

○