

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3928

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reform the American History for Freedom program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 16, 2021

Mr. CAWTHORN (for himself, Mr. MANN, Mr. OWENS, and Ms. SALAZAR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reform the American History for Freedom program, 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 “Informed Electorate
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) A growing contingent of ideological extrem-
9 ists seeking to transform our Nation’s under-

1 standing of the founding principles of 1787 and
2 what makes our country great are promoting histori-
3 cally inaccurate and morally bankrupt curriculum at
4 elementary and secondary schools.

5 (2) Too many individuals in the United States
6 have their rights of speech, peaceable assembly, and
7 religious practice violated by zealous government of-
8 ficials.

9 (3) Informed and enthusiastic civic engagement
10 signifies and sustains a healthy body politic.

11 (4) There is widespread ignorance of western
12 civilization's economic systems and historical events
13 that have created unprecedented human prosperity.

14 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO AMERICAN HISTORY FOR FREE-**
15 **DOM PROGRAM.**

16 Section 805 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
17 U.S.C. 1161e) is amended to read as follows:

18 **“SEC. 805. AMERICAN HISTORY FOR FREEDOM.**

19 “(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—From the amounts ap-
20 propriated under subsection (f), the Secretary is author-
21 ized to award 2-year grants, on a competitive basis, to eli-
22 gible institutions to establish academic centers or aca-
23 demic programs that—

24 “(1) promote and impart knowledge of—

25 “(A) traditional American history;

1 “(B) the history and achievements of
2 Western civilization; and

3 “(C) the importance of civic engagement
4 and the First Amendment to protect and safe-
5 guard free society; and

6 “(2) such institutions continue to operate and
7 fund after the end of the grant period described in
8 subsection (a).

9 “(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 “(1) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term eligi-
11 ble institution means an institution of higher edu-
12 cation as defined in section 101.

13 “(2) FREE INSTITUTION.—The term free insti-
14 tution means an institution that emerged out of
15 Western civilization, such as democracy, constitu-
16 tional government, individual rights, market econom-
17 ics, religious freedom and religious tolerance,
18 meritocracy, and freedom of thought and inquiry.

19 “(3) TRADITIONAL AMERICAN HISTORY.—The
20 term traditional American history means—

21 “(A) the significant constitutional, polit-
22 ical, intellectual, economic, and foreign policy
23 trends and issues that have shaped the course
24 of American history; and

1 “(B) the key episodes, turning points, and
2 leading figures involved in the constitutional,
3 political, intellectual, diplomatic, and economic
4 history of the United States, including the sign-
5 ing of the Declaration of Independence, the
6 Constitutional Convention of 1787, the Bill of
7 Rights, the Emancipation Proclamation, the
8 13th Amendment to the Constitution, the 14th
9 Amendment to the Constitution, and the Civil
10 Rights Act of 1964.

11 “(c) APPLICATION.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible institution
13 that desires a grant under this section shall submit
14 an application to the Secretary at such time, in such
15 manner, and containing such information as the Sec-
16 retary may reasonably require.

17 “(2) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted
18 under paragraph (1) shall include a description of—

19 “(A) how funds made available under this
20 section will be used for the activities set forth
21 under subsection (e), including how such activi-
22 ties will increase knowledge with respect to tra-
23 ditional American history, free institutions, the
24 First Amendment to the Constitution, or West-

1 ern civilization and how the funds will increase
2 civic engagement;

3 “(B) how the eligible institution will ensure
4 that information about the activities funded
5 under this section is widely disseminated pursu-
6 ant to subsection (e)(1)(B);

7 “(C) any activities to be undertaken pursu-
8 ant to subsection (e)(2)(A), including identifica-
9 tion of entities intended to participate;

10 “(D) how funds made available under this
11 section shall be used to supplement and not
12 supplant non-Federal funds available for the ac-
13 tivities described in subsection (e); and

14 “(E) such fiscal controls and accounting
15 procedures as may be necessary to ensure prop-
16 er disbursement of and accounting for funding
17 made available to the eligible institution under
18 this section.

19 “(d) AWARD BASIS.—In awarding grants under this
20 section, the Secretary shall take into consideration the ca-
21 pability of the eligible institution to—

22 “(1) increase access to quality programming
23 that expands knowledge of traditional American his-
24 tory, free institutions, or Western civilization;

1 “(2) involve personnel with strong expertise in
2 traditional American history, free institutions, or
3 Western civilization; and

4 “(3) sustain the activities funded under this
5 section after the grant has expired.

6 “(e) USE OF FUNDS.—

7 “(1) REQUIRED USE OF FUNDS.—Funds pro-
8 vided under this section shall be used to—

9 “(A) establish or strengthen academic pro-
10 grams or centers focused on traditional Amer-
11 ican history, free institutions, or Western civili-
12 zation, which may include —

13 “(i) design and implementation of
14 programs of study, courses, lecture series,
15 seminars, and symposia;

16 “(ii) development, publication, and
17 dissemination of instructional materials;

18 “(iii) research;

19 “(iv) support for faculty teaching in
20 undergraduate and, if applicable, graduate
21 programs;

22 “(v) support for graduate and post-
23 graduate fellowships, if applicable; or

24 “(vi) teacher preparation initiatives
25 that stress content mastery regarding tra-

ditional American history, free institutions,
or Western civilization; and

“(B) conduct outreach activities to ensure
that information about the activities funded
under this section is widely disseminated—

“(i) to undergraduate students (in-
cluding students enrolled in teacher edu-
cation programs, if applicable);

“(ii) to graduate students (including
students enrolled in teacher education pro-
grams, if applicable);

“(iii) to faculty;

“(iv) to local educational agencies;

and

“(v) within the local community and
the general public.

“(2) ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS.—Funds pro-
vided under this section may be used to support—

“(A) collaboration with entities such as—

“(i) local educational agencies, for the
purpose of providing elementary and sec-
ondary school teachers an opportunity to
enhance their knowledge of traditional
American history, free institutions, or
Western civilization; and

1 “(ii) nonprofit organizations whose
2 mission is consistent with the purpose of
3 this section, such as academic organiza-
4 tions, museums, and libraries, for assist-
5 ance in carrying out activities described
6 under subsection (a); and

7 “(B) other activities that meet the pur-
8 poses of this section.

9 “(3) PROHIBITED USE OF FUNDS.—Funds pro-
10 vided under this section may not be used for the
11 purpose of promoting, endorsing, teaching, or dis-
12 tributing material related to the 1619 Project or
13 Critical Race Theory.

14 “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the
15 purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized
16 to be appropriated \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years
17 2022 through 2027.”.

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