
IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 2nd, 2020

Mr. BO (author) and Mr. MORAN (sponsor) (for himself, Mr. CARTON, Mr. KEITH, Mr. MATTHEW, Mr. MIGUEL, Mr. PLURIBUS, Mr. SANDOVAL, and Mr. SLEEK) introduced the following bill;

A BILL

To order the Secretary of Education to establish a grant program to better educate students on civic duties, government, and political participation.

Be it enacted by the House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This bill may be cited as the “Civics Education Funding Act of 2020”.

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

- (1) “The Secretary” - refers to the United States Secretary of Education;
- (2) “Civics” - refers to the study of government, the rights and duties of citizenship, and political participation; and
- (3) “State” - refers to any State, territory of the United States, and the District of Columbia.

SECTION 3. FINDINGS.

This Congress finds that—

- (1) Only twenty-three percent of eighth-graders performed at or above the proficient level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) civics exam;
- (2) Only nine States and the District of Columbia require a full-year length civics course to graduate from High School;

- (3) Only three States' mean score on the U.S. Government Advanced Placement exam was above three in 2016; and
- (4) Only three States' population of people within the ages of eighteen through twenty four had a voter participation rate over fifty-percent.

SECTION 4. ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROGRAM FOR CIVICS EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

The Secretary shall establish a program to award grants, in amounts determined under subsection (b), on a competitive basis, to State educational institutions to establish Civics educational courses in public secondary schools.

(2) DURATION.—

Grants awarded under this subsection shall be for a five-year period, and can be renewed for additional five-year periods upon an adequate showing of progress in providing Civics education, as determined by the Secretary.

(3) MATCHING FUNDS.—

If a State educational agency is to receive a grant under this section, they shall agree to provide matching funds, in an amount not less than one-half of the amount of the grant provided under this section to Civics education in their state.

(b) AMOUNTS OF GRANTS.—

(1) BASE AMOUNT.—

If the Secretary is to approve an application as described in subsection (c), then they shall award a State educational agency, depending on the size of said agency a grant, to be no less than \$1,000,000.

(2) ADDITIONAL GRANTS.—

If the Secretary has approved or denied all applications, and awarded the grants authorized under this subsection in the appropriate manner, and has any funds left over, the Secretary is to award the remainder of the money appropriated for that fiscal year on a competitive basis, giving preference to State educational agencies who, in their application, as described under paragraph (c), described a total lack of Civics education in their public schools. The additional grants described under this subsection shall total no more than three-times the amount of the highest base amount given for any State educational agency.

(c) APPLICATION.—

Any State educational agency desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary, containing such information as the Secretary may require.

Each application shall include—

- (1) How they plan on using the funds to begin properly teaching Civics in public schools;
- (2) Their current level of Civics education in public schools;
- (3) How they plan to distribute the subgrants as lined out in subsection (e); and
- (4) A summary of what types of Civics education they would include in the curriculum.

(d) USE OF GRANTS.—

(1) CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FUNDS.—

Any State educational agency that receives a grant under this section shall use more than one-half of the funds given to begin developing a Civics curriculum, and if they currently have a Civics curriculum, they shall use no more than one-fourth of the funds given to—

- (a) If their current Civics curriculum does not fit into a full year class, to expand such curriculum to fit the length of a normal class; and
- (b) Review the current Civics curriculum to ensure it is teaching students the information they deem necessary to succeed in the course.

(2) SUBGRANTS FOR LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.—

Any additional funds that a state receives in a grant shall be used in a subgrant program, to be given to Local educational agencies for the following purposes—

- (a) Hire any necessary teachers or other staff;
- (b) Adjust salary and benefits for any currently hired teachers and staff, where it may be necessary;
- (c) Purchase any necessary resources to carry out proper Civics education and fulfill the curriculum the state may prescribe;
- (d) Provide interactive learning, such as educational games, videos, projects and other participatory activities; and
- (e) Provide students with any out-of-school activities related to the course where it may be necessary, such as field trips or other activities.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

A State educational agency that receives a grant under this section shall annually prepare and submit a report to the Secretary, which shall include—

- (a) An evaluation of progress made so far when it comes to expanding Civics education in their State;
- (b) An evaluation of the Civics curriculum in their state currently;
- (c) A description or estimate of how many students they have taught the Civics curriculum so far;
- (d) An evaluation of the use of the funds they received through the grant; and
- (e) Any other information the Secretary may require.

SECTION 5. APPROPRIATIONS.

(1) IN GENERAL.—

In order to carry out the grant program as described in section (4), the Department of Education will be appropriated—

- (a) \$300,000,000 for fiscal year 2021; and
- (b) \$250,000,000 for each subsequent fiscal year.

SECTION 6. ENACTMENT.

This Act shall be enacted immediately after it's passing.