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**SENATE BILL 5420**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Chase, Hasegawa, and Saldaña

AN ACT Relating to instruction on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Washington state schools; adding a new section to chapter 28A.230 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that as World War II was drawing to a close in 1946, the world was ready to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person. The United Nations formed a commission on human rights that undertook the creation of the first global expression of rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled. The commission was chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt and its membership was broadly representative of the global community. After nearly two years of drafting and one last long night of debate, the president of the United Nations general assembly called for a vote on the final text. Forty-eight nations voted in favor; eight abstained; none dissented. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was thus adopted in 1948. It is the most recognized and often cited human rights document in the world.

The intention of the United Nations commission on human rights was to draft and pass the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and widely promote education about this great document. As stated by the declaration: "Now, therefore, the General Assembly Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance . . . ."

The legislature finds that the simple yet powerful idea enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights must be promoted and made widely known through education.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows:

School districts are encouraged to implement a program at least once a year that educates students on the content and importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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