
HOUSE BILL 1194

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2003 Regular Session

By Representatives Delvin, Condotta, Nixon, Anderson, Bush, Sump, McMahan, Roach, Crouse, Holmquist, Schindler, Boldt, Buck, Hinkle, Campbell, Pearson, Upthegrove and Mielke

Read first time 01/21/2003. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring the teaching of the relationship of
2 the Declaration of Independence to the constitutions of the United
3 States and Washington state; amending RCW 28A.230.170; adding a new
4 section to chapter 28A.230 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

6 **LEGISLATIVE INTENT**

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The Declaration of Independence makes it
8 clear "that all men are created equal and are endowed with certain
9 unalienable rights, that among these rights are Life, Liberty, and the
10 pursuit of Happiness. To secure these rights Governments are
11 instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of
12 the governed"

13 The Washington state Constitution echoes the Declaration of
14 Independence. The preamble states: "We the people of the state of
15 Washington grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for our
16 liberties, do ordain this constitution." Then Article 1, section 1
17 states: "All political power is inherent in the people, and

1 governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed,
2 and are established to protect and maintain individual rights." The
3 schools have neglected to teach this principle.

4 The legislature wants to give children and their children's
5 children the blessings of liberty. Schools must teach the relationship
6 of the Declaration of Independence to United States and Washington
7 state constitutions for this to happen. This is not a religion or a
8 separation of church and state issue. The issue is teaching the
9 substance and meanings of the liberties provided by the United States
10 and Washington state constitutions as outlined by the Declaration of
11 Independence.

12 **POLICIES AND PURPOSES**

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.170 states: "The study of the
14 Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the state of
15 Washington shall be a condition prerequisite to graduation from public
16 and private high schools of this state." However, the courts have
17 ruled "any study constitutes study." Therefore, the superintendent of
18 public instruction has left it up to the teacher. Teachers have not
19 provided any noticeable instruction to students on the relationship of
20 the Declaration of Independence to the United States Constitution,
21 including the Bill of Rights, and the Washington state Constitution.

22 This act requires public and private schools to teach the
23 relationship of the Declaration of Independence to the constitutions of
24 the United States and Washington state and display these documents on
25 school property.

26 **RELATING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**
27 **TO THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**

28 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.170 and 1985 c 341 s 1 are each amended to
29 read as follows:

30 The study of the Constitution of the United States and the
31 Constitution of the state of Washington shall be a condition
32 prerequisite to graduation from the public and private high schools of
33 this state. The state board of education acting upon the advice of the
34 superintendent of public instruction shall provide by rule (~~or~~

1 ~~regulation))~~ for the implementation of this section into the K-12
2 social studies curriculum. Local school boards are responsible for
3 providing books that explain the meaning and substance of the
4 Declaration of Independence, and the constitutions of the United States
5 and the state of Washington. Local school boards are responsible for
6 displaying copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of
7 Rights, the United States Constitution, and the Washington state
8 Constitution.

9 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 The word "study" in RCW 28A.230.170 includes:

12 (1) Illustrating, by teacher instruction, how the Declaration of
13 Independence provided the outline for both the United States
14 Constitution and the Washington state Constitution;

15 (2) Relating sections of the Washington state Constitution to
16 statements made in the Declaration of Independence and the United
17 States Constitution;

18 (3) Teaching the heritage and meaning of this statement from the
19 Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident,
20 that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator
21 with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty,
22 and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, governments
23 are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent
24 of the governed." Suggested sources are: The Magna Carta (1215), the
25 1628 Petition of Right to King Charles I, the writings of Sir Edward
26 Coke (1552-1634), John Locke (1632-1704), the Spirit of Laws (1748) by
27 Charles De Montesquieu, and Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780);

28 (4) Teacher instruction on The Northwest Ordinance, which sets the
29 requirements for states to join the union, shall be required. Emphasis
30 shall be placed on teaching the educational intent of the founding
31 fathers as presented in Article 3 of the Northwest Ordinance, which
32 states: "Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good
33 government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of
34 education shall forever be encouraged ...";

35 (5) Teaching the heritage and meaning of the religious freedom
36 statement of Article I, section 11 of the Washington state
37 Constitution. Suggested student readings include: Thomas Jefferson's

1 "Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom" (1786), and James Madison's
2 "Memorial and Remonstrance." The purpose of this instruction is to
3 illustrate the struggle for obtaining "absolute freedom of conscience
4 in all matters of religious sentiment ..." as stated in Article I,
5 section 11 of the Washington state Constitution;

6 (6) Requiring that students be encouraged to memorize the preamble
7 of the United States Constitution along with the preamble and Article
8 I, section 1 of the Washington state Constitution;

9 (7) Requiring that students read and be taught George Washington's
10 first inaugural address and his farewell address; Abraham Lincoln's
11 first inaugural address, and Lincoln's Gettysburg address for their
12 advice in supporting and defending the United States Constitution;

13 (8) Testing, including state standardized testing, on the meanings
14 of the constitutions and on the meaning of such words as: Tyrant,
15 despotism, providence, consanguinity, rectitude, endowed, unalienable,
16 created equal, tranquility, posterity, ordain, blessings,
17 licentiousness, and "law of nature" as defined in the 1828 edition of
18 Webster's Dictionary;

19 (9) Displaying the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights,
20 preamble to the United States Constitution, and the preamble and the
21 first twelve sections of the Washington state Constitution with a note
22 stating: "For the complete text of the Washington state Constitution
23 go to the school library"; and

24 (10) Illustrating, with teacher instruction, the relationship of
25 the "Pledge of Allegiance to the United States" to the Declaration of
26 Independence and the Washington state Constitution (the preamble,
27 Article I, section 1, and Article I, section 11). This instruction
28 shall be taught at the time the "Pledge of Allegiance" is taught.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Part headings used in this act are not any
30 part of the law.

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