

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6902

To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs that include the history of peoples of African descent in the settling and founding of America, the economic and political environments that led to the development, institutionalization, and abolition of slavery and its impact on all Americans, the exploration and expansion of America, impact on and contributions to the development and enhancement of American life, United States history, literature, the economy, politics, body of laws, and culture, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 15, 2020

Ms. FUDGE (for herself, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. BASS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. SOTO, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CLAY, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. COX of California, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. MENG, Mr. RYAN, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. RUSH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. LURIA, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. VELA, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mrs. TORRES of California, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. BROWN of Maryland) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs that include the history of peoples of African descent

in the settling and founding of America, the economic and political environments that led to the development, institutionalization, and abolition of slavery and its impact on all Americans, the exploration and expansion of America, impact on and contributions to the development and enhancement of American life, United States history, literature, the economy, politics, body of laws, and culture, 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 “Black History is Amer-
5 ican History Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Whereas since before its founding, the
9 United States of America has benefited from and
10 been enhanced by the integral role African Ameri-
11 cans have played in our country’s history and con-
12 tributions to the world.

13 (2) Whereas African American history does not
14 begin in the Americas. It can be traced back to the
15 great empires of West Africa beginning in A.D. 790,
16 which aided the establishment and survival of colo-
17 nies in America and the New World, generally, and
18 fought against European oppression.

1 (3) Whereas African Americans have rep-
2 resented a significant portion of the American popu-
3 lation from nearly 20 percent at the signing of the
4 Declaration of Independence, almost all of whom, if
5 not all, were victims of the largest forced deporta-
6 tions in recorded history, the transatlantic slave
7 trade and resulting African diaspora. It is estimated
8 over 10,000,000 free Africans were enslaved between
9 the mid-fifteenth and nineteenth centuries during
10 the diaspora.

11 (4) Whereas slavery was not abolished and Afri-
12 can Americans not acknowledged as American citi-
13 zens until the mid-nineteenth century, servitude did
14 not abate their contributions to the settlement,
15 growth, and development of the United States,
16 which continued through Post-Reconstruction, Jim
17 Crow, industrialization, World Wars and conflicts,
18 innovation and inventiveness, constitutional
19 progress, and every aspect of American society.

20 (5) Whereas during the civil rights movement of
21 the 1950s and 1960s, civil rights leaders and activ-
22 ists championed the fight for equal rights, including
23 voting rights, for all African Americans.

24 (6) Whereas the seminal case of *Brown v.*
25 *Board of Education*, decided May 17, 1954, found

1 that the decades old policy of separate but equal ac-
2 cess to education was inherently unequal, and the
3 segregation of Black public-school students was no
4 longer the law of the land.

5 (7) Whereas African Americans continue to
6 fight discrimination, structural racism, economic in-
7 equities, and benign and overt omission of the inte-
8 gral role they played in our country's rise to great-
9 ness.

10 (8) Whereas currently, 12 States (Arkansas,
11 California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey,
12 New York, Michigan, Mississippi, Rhode Island,
13 South Carolina, and Texas) have passed educational
14 laws requiring Black history be incorporated into the
15 curricula of all public schools.

16 (9) Whereas Congress established the National
17 Museum of African American History and Culture
18 in 2003 after decades of efforts to promote and
19 highlight the contributions of African Americans,
20 which serves as an indication of the national impor-
21 tance of examining Black history. Since opening in
22 2016, the museum has worked to educate the public
23 on the American story through the lens of African
24 American history and culture and provide educators,
25 parents, caregivers, and students with tools and re-

1 sources on the African American experience, its na-
2 tional impact, race, racism, and the importance of
3 tolerance and inclusivity.

4 (10) Whereas according to a 2015 research
5 study conducted by the National Museum of African
6 American History and Culture and reported in Re-
7 search into the State of African American History
8 and Culture in K–12 Public Schools, key findings in-
9 dicated that teachers considered Black history as in-
10 influential in understanding the complexity of United
11 States history.

12 (11) Whereas the importance of Black history
13 is reflected in the National Assessment of Edu-
14 cational Progress United States History framework,
15 from pre-colonization through contemporary Amer-
16 ica.

17 (12) Whereas the Federal Government, through
18 support for educational activities of national muse-
19 ums established under Federal law, can assist teach-
20 ers in efforts to incorporate historically accurate in-
21 struction on the comprehensive history of African
22 Americans and students in their exploration of Black
23 history as an integral part of American history.

1 **SEC. 3. AMERICAN HISTORY AND CIVICS EDUCATION.**

2 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—Section 2231(a) of the
3 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
4 U.S.C. 6661(a)) is amended—

5 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by
6 inserting “, which shall include Black history,” after
7 “American history”; and

8 (2) in paragraph (2)—

9 (A) by inserting “which shall include Black
10 history,” after “American history,”; and

11 (B) by inserting “, which shall include
12 Black history” after “traditional American his-
13 tory”.

14 (b) PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACADEMIES
15 FOR AMERICAN HISTORY AND CIVICS.—Section 2232 of
16 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
17 U.S.C. 6662) is amended—

18 (1) in subsection (a)—

19 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, which
20 shall include Black history,” after “American
21 History”; and

22 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, which
23 shall include Black history,” after “American
24 History”;

1 (2) in subsection (c)(1), by inserting “, which
2 shall include Black history,” after “American his-
3 tory”;

4 (3) in subsection (e)—

5 (A) in paragraph (1)—

6 (i) by inserting “, which shall include
7 Black history,” after “American history”;

8 (ii) in subparagraph (A)—

9 (I) by inserting “, which shall in-
10 clude Black history,” after “teachers
11 of American history”; and

12 (II) by inserting “, which shall
13 include Black history,” after “subjects
14 of American history”; and

15 (iii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting
16 “, which shall include Black history,” after
17 “American history”;

18 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, which
19 shall include Black history,” after “American
20 history”; and

21 (C) in paragraph (4), by inserting “, and
22 with the Smithsonian Institution’s National
23 Museum of African American History and Cul-
24 ture initiative providing programs and resources

1 for educators and students” after “National
2 Parks”; and

3 (4) in subsection (f)—

4 (A) by inserting “, which shall include
5 Black history,” after “American history”;

6 (B) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “,
7 which shall include Black history,” after
8 “American history”; and

9 (C) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “,
10 which shall include Black history,” after
11 “American history”.

12 (c) NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—Section 2233 of the Ele-
13 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
14 6663) is amended—

15 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “which shall
16 include Black history,” after “American history”;
17 and

18 (2) in subsection (b), by inserting “which shall
19 include Black history,” after “American history”.

20 (d) NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
21 PROGRESS.—Section 303(b)(2)(D) of the National As-
22 sessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20
23 U.S.C. 9622(b)(2)(D)) is amended by inserting “(which
24 shall include Black history)” after “history”.

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