

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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SENATE BILL 442  
Corrected Copy 3/21/97

Short Title: American Heritage Education Act.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Senators Allran, Ballance; Albertson, Ballance, Ballantine, Blust, Carpenter, Clark, Cochrane, East, Forrester, Foxx, Hartsell, Hoyle, Jordan, Ledbetter, Lucas, Martin of Pitt, Odom, Page, Perdue, Rand, Rucho, Shaw of Cumberland, Shaw of Guilford, Warren, and Webster.

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Referred to: Education/Higher Education.

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March 20, 1997

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS RECEIVE  
3 INSTRUCTION ON OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 Section 1. G.S. 115C-81(g) reads as rewritten:

6 "(g) Civic Literacy. –

7 (1) Local boards of education shall require during the high school years the  
8 teaching of the nation's founding and related documents, which shall  
9 include at least the major principles in the Declaration of Independence,  
10 the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most  
11 important of the Federalist Papers.

12 (2) Local boards of education shall require that high school students  
13 demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nation's founding and  
14 related documents in order to receive a certificate or diploma of  
15 graduation from high school.

1 (3) Local boards of education shall include among the requirements for  
2 graduation from high school a passing grade in all courses that include  
3 primary instruction in the Declaration of Independence, the United  
4 States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the  
5 Federalist Papers.

6 (3a) Local boards of education shall allow and may encourage any public  
7 school teacher or administrator to read or post in a public school  
8 building, classroom, or event, any excerpts or portions of writings,  
9 documents, and records that reflect the history or heritage of the United  
10 States, including but not limited to (i) the preamble to the North  
11 Carolina Constitution, (ii) the Declaration of Independence, (iii) the  
12 United States Constitution, (iv) the Mayflower Compact, (v) the  
13 national motto, (vi) the National Anthem, (vii) the Pledge of Allegiance,  
14 (viii) the writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the  
15 founding fathers and Presidents of the United States, (ix) organic  
16 documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary, Federalist,  
17 and post-Federalist eras, (x) decisions of the Supreme Court of the  
18 United States, and (xi) acts of the Congress of the United States,  
19 including the published text of the Congressional Record. There shall be  
20 no content-based censorship of American history or heritage in the  
21 public schools of this State based on religious or other references in  
22 these writings, documents, and records.

23 (4) The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level  
24 curriculum-based tests developed and administered statewide beginning  
25 with academic year 1990-91 include questions related to the Declaration  
26 of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments,  
27 and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

28 (5) The State Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of  
29 education, as appropriate, shall establish curriculum content and provide  
30 for teacher training to ensure that the intent and provisions of this  
31 subsection are carried out. The curriculum content established shall  
32 include a review of the contributions made by Americans of all races  
33 during the period in which our nation was founded."

34 Section 2. The State Board of Education shall provide a copy of this act to  
35 each local school superintendent in the State, and each local school superintendent shall  
36 ensure that school personnel within the unit are informed about the act.

37 Section 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.