

Senate Bill 426

By: Senators Ligon, Jr. of the 3rd, Tippins of the 37th, Carter of the 1st, Rogers of the 21st, Hill of the 32nd and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 elementary and secondary education, so as to enact "The Teach Freedom Act"; to modify
3 requirements for instruction in United States history, American government and civics,
4 economics, and social studies; to establish Celebrate Freedom Week in elementary and
5 middle school grades; to require the Department of Education to develop a website for
6 resources and instructional support; to require that the Professional Standards Commission
7 and the Department of Education cooperatively develop an online course on America's
8 founding philosophy and principles to be offered as professional learning units; to provide
9 for legislative progress reports; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and
10 for other purposes.

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

12 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

13 This Act shall be known and may be cited as "The Teach Freedom Act."

14 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 2.**

15 The General Assembly recognizes that a positive understanding of American history and
16 government is essential to good citizenship and that the public schools are the primary public
17 institutions charged with responsibility for assisting children and youth in gaining that
18 understanding. The survival of the republic depends upon our nation's people acquiring a
19 clear understanding of the founding philosophy and the founding principles of a government
20 for a free people, and that, as citizens, they should remain vigilant to maintain those freedoms
21 recognized in our founding documents of the Declaration of Independence, the United States
22 Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

23 **SECTION 3.**

24 Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and
25 secondary education, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

26 "ARTICLE 19A

27 20-2-1020.

28 (a) The State Board of Education and local boards of education shall periodically review
29 school curricula, text books, electronic resources, and activities to ensure that effective
30 instruction in United States history, American government and civics, economics, and
31 social studies is taking place in the public school system, including traditional, blended,
32 and online settings, with an emphasis on those philosophical foundations of the American
33 form of government and the principles underlying the Declaration of Independence, the
34 United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights and key concepts from the Federalist
35 Papers and Anti-Federalist Papers. Courses in United States history, American government
36 and civics, economics, and social studies should emphasize these key documents, key
37 individuals who authorized or contributed to these documents, and key movements in the
38 colonization period and the Founding Era through the first six Presidents, which may also
39 include key influences from Western Civilization upon the establishment of the United
40 States.

41 (b) Local boards of education shall solicit public input as part of the review process.

42 (c) Instruction, activities, and curricula in United States history, particularly in the high
43 school curriculum, shall be taught chronologically and include a study of key events, key
44 people, and their historically significant activities and accomplishments in the settlement
45 of North America and a thorough study of key events, key people, and their historically
46 significant activities and accomplishments in the colonial period and in the Founding Era,
47 including the following:

48 (1) The following teaching concepts:

49 (A) A timeline of important benchmarks in the settlement of North America from the
50 1400's through the colonial period along with a study of key original documents such
51 as the Mayflower Compact;

52 (B) The political, religious, and economic reasons that motivated people to explore and
53 colonize the New World hazarding their lives to seek new freedoms and opportunities;

54 (C) The context of how events in England, such as change of leadership, as well as the
55 political and religious climate throughout Europe affected the colonization of America,
56 as in immigration trends, wars, and colonial charters;

- 57 (D) The pivotal role that the institution of private property ownership had on the
58 survival of Jamestown;
- 59 (E) The growing differences regarding religious freedom in the New World as
60 compared to that of Europe, highlighting the growing religious diversity in America and
61 how such diversity helped prepare the way for the unique concept of religious freedom
62 as a foundational attribute of a free people, specifically including the Virginia debate
63 and context of the Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom and comparing that debate
64 with the debate over the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses in the first Congress
65 during the drafting of the Bill of Rights;
- 66 (F) A timeline of the important benchmarks creating the circumstances that led to the
67 War for Independence and key events taking place during the war;
- 68 (G) Specific knowledge of the actual events that led to each of the resolves listed in the
69 Declaration of Independence and the atmosphere of war that surrounded the writing of
70 the Declaration and the negotiations that led to the unanimous signing of the
71 Declaration;
- 72 (H) The making of the Articles of Confederation;
- 73 (I) Reasons for growing dissatisfaction with the Articles of Confederation and events
74 that led to the call for a Constitutional Convention;
- 75 (J) The key debates of the Constitutional Convention and the roles of the delegates
76 with emphasis on the key people and their arguments;
- 77 (K) The United States form of government, a compound constitutional republic with
78 the free and frequent elections of a democratic process;
- 79 (L) The ratification process and the major debates between the Federalists and the
80 Anti-Federalists as well as the key objections made by states;
- 81 (M) The first Congress and the passage of the Bill of Rights;
- 82 (N) A focus on the first six Presidents and their major accomplishments, before their
83 presidencies and during their presidencies; and
- 84 (O) A focus on early Chief Justices of the United States Supreme Court, particularly
85 John Jay and John Marshall, and their major accomplishments, both on and off the
86 court;
- 87 (2) The following historical documents that students shall consult:
- 88 (A) Magna Carta;
- 89 (B) The Petition of Right;
- 90 (C) The English Bill of Rights;
- 91 (D) The Mayflower Compact;
- 92 (E) Selected writings of Edward Coke and William Blackstone as the early foundation
93 for the American legal system; various colonial charters, including the Charter for the

94 Georgia Colony; and various examples of colonial laws, early state constitutions,
 95 including the Preamble to the Georgia Constitution, and early state laws;
 96 (F) The Olive Branch Petition;
 97 (G) The Declaration of Independence, including the context of various acts of the
 98 British Parliament and their effects, starting with the Navigation Acts of 1651 to the
 99 Stamp Act of 1765 and through the Coercive (Intolerable) Acts of 1774 to the New
 100 England Restraining Act of 1775;
 101 (H) The Articles of Confederation;
 102 (I) The United States Constitution and selections from the debate records, including
 103 selections from various ratification debates in the states;
 104 (J) The Bill of Rights;
 105 (K) The Northwest Ordinance;
 106 (L) The Federalist Papers;
 107 (M) The Anti-Federalist Papers;
 108 (N) John Locke's Treatises on Government;
 109 (O) Montesquieu, with special emphasis on the structure of divided government and
 110 his reasons for that structure;
 111 (P) Thomas Paine's 'Common Sense';
 112 (Q) George Washington's Farewell Address (1796);
 113 (R) John Adams's Thanksgiving Proclamation (1799);
 114 (S) James Madison's Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments
 115 along with the context of the debate in Virginia between Thomas Jefferson and Patrick
 116 Henry on the Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom as opposed to the bill on religious
 117 assessments;
 118 (T) *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), emphasizing the value of the written United States
 119 Constitution and the role of the judiciary;
 120 (U) Various writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the Founders and the
 121 Presidents of the United States;
 122 (V) Various organic documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary,
 123 Federalist, and post Federalist eras;
 124 (W) The significance of early United States Supreme Court decisions;
 125 (X) Key early acts of the United States Congress, including some references to the
 126 published text of the Congressional Record;
 127 (Y) Key actions of the first six Presidents; and
 128 (Z) American songs and poems that reflect the struggle for Independence; and
 129 (3) The following biographical sketches of key individuals in early American history and
 130 their important accomplishments;

- 131 (A) Various Founding Fathers, primarily the signers of the Declaration and the United
 132 States Constitution;
- 133 (B) The first six Presidents, and particularly George Washington and key individuals,
 134 such as Alexander Hamilton, who served with him in war or in his presidential cabinets;
- 135 (C) Major contributors to independence efforts, such as Patrick Henry and Paul Revere,
 136 the Minutemen, the Black-robbed regiment, and other war heroes; and
- 137 (D) Supreme Court Justices in the Founding Era, with emphasis Chief Justices John
 138 Jay and John Marshall; two 'Fathers of American Jurisprudence,' Supreme Court Justice
 139 Joseph Story and chief justice of the New York Supreme Court James Kent, also known
 140 as 'America's Blackstone'; and Supreme Court Justice James Wilson, a signer of both
 141 the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution who is known for
 142 laying the foundation for American jurisprudence.
- 143 (d) Instruction in American government and civics, particularly in the high school
 144 curriculum, shall include a thorough study of the founding philosophy and the founding
 145 principles of American government through:
- 146 (1) The following concepts:
- 147 (A) The United States form of government, a compound constitutional republic with
 148 the free and frequent elections of a democratic process;
- 149 (B) Political philosophies upon which the Founders relied for building the American
 150 political system, with an emphasis on John Locke and Montesquieu in contrast to those
 151 rejected by the Founders;
- 152 (C) The natural law concept of creator endowed inalienable rights of the people which
 153 a just government must respect as noted in the Declaration of Independence, along with
 154 the Founders' stated purpose for government, that of protecting the natural rights and
 155 property of the people as noted in Federalist Papers No. 10 and 51 and summarized in
 156 the Preamble of the United States Constitution, among other documents;
- 157 (D) The ideal of a self-governing people creating their own form of government which
 158 derives its just powers from the consent of the governed;
- 159 (E) The structure of America's limited, divided government based upon the Founders'
 160 understanding of man's fallible human nature, with emphasis on Federalist Papers Nos.
 161 10, 47, and 51;
- 162 (F) The importance of the written Constitution that limits the reach of the federal
 163 government as noted in Federalist Paper No. 45 and requires the separation of powers
 164 with checks and balances at all levels of government as explained in Federalist Papers
 165 No. 9 and 47 and how such a divided structure was designed to protect the liberties of
 166 the people as noted in Federalist Papers No. 47 and 51 and how such a structure

167 allocates the most weight of power to the legislative branch as explained in Federalist
168 Paper No. 51 and the least to the judiciary as noted in Federalist Paper No. 78;
169 (G) Federalism's role in keeping government as close to the people as possible and in
170 fostering a peaceful, pluralistic society composed of a multiplicity of interests, abilities,
171 sects, and economic classes as explained in Federalist Papers No. 10 and 51;
172 (H) The ideal of the rule of law and equal justice under the law for all citizens;
173 (I) The purpose of the Bill of Rights in its original application to bar actions of the
174 federal government;
175 (J) The value of First Amendment freedoms for ensuring that a free people remain free:
176 freedom of religion (free exercise clause and the Establishment Clause), freedom of
177 speech (including the concepts of freedom of thought and free inquiry), freedom of the
178 press, and freedom of assembly (including the concept of freedom of association);
179 (K) The value of civil authority over military power within the study of the Second and
180 Third Amendments;
181 (L) The judicial presumption of innocence of any crime until proven guilty with rights
182 of habeas corpus within the study of the Fourth through Eighth Amendments;
183 (M) The value of reserving rights as well as powers not enumerated in the Constitution
184 to the people or to the states within the study of the Ninth and Tenth Amendments and
185 how these reserved powers are intended to bar the encroachment of federal power;
186 (N) The Founders' belief that the healthy maintenance of the republic would require
187 a moral and virtuous citizenry educated in the foundational philosophy and principles
188 of the nation;
189 (O) The Founders' views about private property and the constitutional protections for
190 property rights contrasted with their views regarding 'a rage for paper money, for an
191 abolition of debts' or 'for an equal division of property,' as explained in Federalist Paper
192 No. 10;
193 (P) The constitutional protections and encouragement of free enterprise and the
194 Declaration's resolves that relate to unjust government interference with trade, free
195 enterprise, and private property rights;
196 (Q) The Founders' views about the proper boundaries of public debt;
197 (R) The Founders' views about the need for currency with intrinsic value and the
198 constitutional provisions about currency;
199 (S) Constitutional limitations on the General Welfare Clause, the Commerce Clause,
200 and the Necessary and Proper Clause as well as how such limitations affected the power
201 to tax and spend as explained in Federalist Paper No. 41;
202 (T) Peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations; entangling alliances with
203 none;

204 (U) An understanding of the weakness of the Articles of Confederation and the key
 205 arguments and compromises of the Constitutional Convention as described in
 206 convention debates;

207 (V) An understanding of the mandate of the British government that required slavery
 208 in the colonies and the actions of various Founders who always opposed slavery, as
 209 well as early civic and religious movements to end slavery and the self-correcting
 210 constitutional language the Founders included to allow the nation to end the institution
 211 of slavery;

212 (W) A focus on the composition and the early decisions of the United States Supreme
 213 Court that helped shape the scope of the judiciary and its relationship to the other two
 214 branches of government and its relationship to the states, along with how the early court
 215 interpreted the Bill of Rights;

216 (X) Key early acts of the United States Congress, including the Bill of Rights, the
 217 Judiciary Act, and the Sedition Acts, including some references to the published text
 218 of the Congressional Record;

219 (Y) Key actions of the first six Presidents, but particularly how the presidency of
 220 George Washington and his cabinet helped shape the grand design of the national
 221 government; and

222 (Z) The Founders' charge to future generations for eternal vigilance to maintain the
 223 freedoms and the right to self-government as bequeathed in the Constitution; and

224 (2) The following materials in American government and civics:

225 (A) Magna Carta;

226 (B) The Petition of Right;

227 (C) The English Bill of Rights;

228 (D) The Mayflower Compact;

229 (E) Selected writings of Edward Coke and William Blackstone as the early foundation
 230 for the American legal system; various colonial charters, including the Charter for the
 231 Georgia Colony; and various examples of colonial laws, early state constitutions,
 232 including the Preamble to the Georgia Constitution, and early state laws;

233 (F) The Olive Branch Petition;

234 (G) The Declaration of Independence, including the context of various acts of the
 235 British Parliament and their effects, starting with the Navigation Acts of 1651 to the
 236 Stamp Act of 1765 and through the Coercive (Intolerable) Acts of 1774 to the New
 237 England Restraining Act of 1775;

238 (H) The Articles of Confederation;

239 (I) The United States Constitution and selections from the debate records, including
 240 selections from various ratification debates in the states;

- 241 (J) The Bill of Rights;
 242 (K) The Northwest Ordinance;
 243 (L) The Federalist Papers, particularly Federalist Papers No. 9, 10, 41, 45, 47, 51 and
 244 78;
 245 (M) The Anti-Federalist Papers, with emphasis on Brutus and Cato;
 246 (N) John Locke's Treatises on Government, with emphasis on the nature of man, the
 247 nature of government, and the abuses of government;
 248 (O) Montesquieu, with special emphasis on the structure of divided government and
 249 his reasons for that structure;
 250 (P) Thomas Paine's 'Common Sense';
 251 (Q) *The Farmer Refuted* by Alexander Hamilton (1775);
 252 (R) George Washington's Farewell Address (1796);
 253 (S) John Adams's Thanksgiving Proclamation (1799);
 254 (T) Thomas Jefferson's 'Wall of Separation' letter along with the entire context
 255 preceding the letter and a copy of the original letter to which President Jefferson was
 256 responding;
 257 (U) James Madison's Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments
 258 along with the context of the debate in Virginia between Thomas Jefferson and Patrick
 259 Henry on the Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom as opposed to the bill on religious
 260 assessments;
 261 (V) Frederick Douglass's 1852 speech, 'What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?' and his
 262 1860 lecture on the United States Constitution entitled 'Unconstitutionality of Slavery,'
 263 given in Glasgow, Scotland; and
 264 (W) *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), emphasizing the value of the written United States
 265 Constitution and the role of the judiciary as well as the reactions of Thomas Jefferson
 266 and James Madison to the decision;
 267 (e) Instruction, activities, and curricula in United States history, particularly in the high
 268 school curriculum, shall be taught chronologically and include a study of key events, key
 269 people and their historically significant activities and accomplishments in the settlement
 270 of North America, and a thorough study of key events, key people and their historically
 271 significant activities and accomplishments in the colonial period and in the Founding Era:
 272 (1) Teaching concepts shall include at least the following:
 273 (A) A timeline of important benchmarks in the settlement of North America from the
 274 1400s through the colonial period along with a study of key original documents such
 275 as the Mayflower Compact;
 276 (B) The political, religious, and economic reasons that motivated people to explore and
 277 colonize the New World hazarding their lives to seek new freedoms and opportunities;

- 278 (C) The context of how events in England, such as change of leadership, as well as the
 279 political and religious climate throughout Europe affected the colonization of America;
 280 as in immigration trends, wars, and colonial charters;
- 281 (D) The pivotal role that the institution of private property ownership had on the
 282 survival of Jamestown;
- 283 (E) The growing differences regarding religious freedom in the New World as
 284 compared to that of Europe highlighting the growing religious diversity in America and
 285 how such diversity helped prepare the way for the unique concept of religious freedom
 286 as a foundational attribute of a free people; specifically including the Virginia debate
 287 and context of the Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom and comparing that debate
 288 with the debate over the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses in the first Congress
 289 during the drafting of the Bill of Rights;
- 290 (F) A timeline of the important benchmarks creating the circumstances that led to the
 291 War for Independence and key events taking place during the war;
- 292 (G) Specific knowledge of the actual events that led to each of the resolves listed in the
 293 Declaration of Independence and the atmosphere of war that surrounded the writing of
 294 the Declaration and the negotiations that led to the unanimous signing of the
 295 Declaration;
- 296 (H) The making of the Articles of Confederation;
- 297 (I) Reasons for growing dissatisfaction with the Articles of Confederation and events
 298 that led to the call for a Constitutional Convention;
- 299 (J) The key debates of the Constitutional Convention and the roles of the delegates
 300 with emphasis on the key people and their arguments;
- 301 (K) The United States' form of government, a compound constitutional republic with
 302 the free and frequent elections of a democratic process;
- 303 (L) The ratification process and the major debates between the Federalists and the
 304 Anti-Federalists as well as the key objections made by states;
- 305 (M) The first Congress and the passage of the Bill of Rights;
- 306 (N) A focus on the first six Presidents and their major accomplishments, before their
 307 presidencies and during their presidencies; and
- 308 (O) A focus on the first two Chief Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court and their major
 309 accomplishments, both on and off the Court.
- 310 (2) Historical documents that students shall consult shall include at least the following:
- 311 (A) The Magna Carta;
- 312 (B) The Petition of Right;
- 313 (C) The English Bill of Rights;
- 314 (D) The Mayflower Compact;

315 (E) Selected writings of Edward Coke and William Blackstone as the early foundation
316 for the American legal system; and various colonial charters, including the Charter for
317 the Georgia Colony; various examples of colonial laws, early state constitutions,
318 including the Preamble to the Georgia Constitution, and early state laws;
319 (F) The Olive Branch Petition;
320 (G) The Declaration of Independence (including the context of various acts of the
321 British Parliament and their effects starting with the Navigation Acts of 1651 to the
322 Stamp Act of 1765 and through the Coercive (Intolerable) Acts of 1774 to the New
323 England Restraining Act of 1775);
324 (H) The Articles of Confederation;
325 (I) The United States Constitution and selections from the debate records, including
326 selections from various ratification debates in the states;
327 (J) The Bill of Rights;
328 (K) The Northwest Ordinance;
329 (L) The Federalist Papers;
330 (M) The Anti-Federalist Papers;
331 (N) John Locke's Second Treatise on Government;
332 (O) Montesquieu, with special emphasis on the structure of divided government and
333 his reasons for that structure;
334 (P) Thomas Paine's Common Sense;
335 (Q) George Washington's Farewell Address (1796);
336 (R) John Adams' Thanksgiving Proclamation (1799);
337 (S) James Madison's Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments
338 along with the context of the debate in Virginia between Thomas Jefferson and Patrick
339 Henry on the Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom as opposed to the bill on
340 Religious Assessments;
341 (T) *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), emphasizing the value of the written U.S.
342 Constitution and the role of the judiciary;
343 (U) Various writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the Founders and the
344 Presidents of the United States;
345 (V) Various organic documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary,
346 Federalist, and post Federalist eras;
347 (W) The significance of early United States Supreme Court decisions;
348 (X) Key early Acts of the United States Congress, including some references to the
349 published text of the Congressional Record;
350 (Y) Key actions of the first six Presidents; and
351 (Z) American songs and poems that reflect the struggle for Independence.

- 352 (3) Biographical sketches of key individuals in early American history, including:
 353 (A) Various Founding Fathers, primarily the signers of the Declaration and the U.S.
 354 Constitution;
 355 (B) The first six Presidents, and particularly George Washington and key individuals,
 356 such as Alexander Hamilton who served with him in war or in his presidential cabinets;
 357 (C) Major contributors to Independence efforts, such as Patrick Henry and Paul
 358 Revere, the Minutemen, the Black-robbed regiment, and other war heroes; and
 359 (D) Supreme Court Justices in the Founding Era, with emphasis on the first two Chief
 360 Justices, John Jay and John Marshall, as well as 'America's Blackstone,' Chief Justice
 361 of the New York Supreme Court, James Kent.
- 362 (f) Instruction in economics, particularly in the high school curriculum, shall include a
 363 systematic study of:
- 364 (1) Economic systems, such as free market capitalism, socialism, and communism along
 365 with the economic theories behind these systems but with an emphasis on the American
 366 ideal of the free enterprise system, stressing the value of work, personal responsibility,
 367 perseverance, and diligence;
- 368 (2) The basic characteristics of a free enterprise system, including the roles played by the
 369 rule of law, private property ownership including both real property and property interests
 370 in one's own creative works, profit and loss, competition and regulation, supply and
 371 demand, consumers and producers, entrepreneurship, and technological innovation in
 372 creating and sustaining a free enterprise system;
- 373 (3) The concepts that the free enterprise system presents both economic risk and
 374 economic liberty as well as the equality of opportunity of all citizens to engage in free
 375 enterprise activities, yet recognizing that different abilities and motivation in people will
 376 lead to unequal outcomes;
- 377 (4) The benefits of economic growth, wealth creation, and technological innovation and
 378 the role played by the free enterprise system in achieving these benefits as compared to
 379 other economic systems;
- 380 (5) The role of the United States Constitution in preserving economic freedom and
 381 protecting private property, including such items as copyright and patents, free trade,
 382 freedom of travel, the valuation of money, and limits on taxation; and the property
 383 interest one has in one's own person, speech, ideas, beliefs, and creations, and various
 384 statements of the Founders regarding the importance of private property rights;
- 385 (6) The rule of law, with the understanding that the rule of law entails a body of stable
 386 law known and promulgated among the people, and its role in regulating a fair economic
 387 playing field among citizens, commerce between the citizens of the states, and commerce
 388 between the people of the United States and other nations, and to prevent arbitrary legal

389 decisions by unelected boards and authorities, and Alexander Hamilton's role in
 390 establishing the government structure which would provide the stability for a free
 391 enterprise system to thrive;

392 (7) The impact of government spending, regulations, and tax, monetary, and trade
 393 policies upon economic growth, entrepreneurship, productivity, and technological
 394 innovation;

395 (8) The opportunities presented by, and the challenges of, starting a business; and

396 (9) Economic philosophy that introduces the economic theories of Aristotle, Adam
 397 Smith, John Stuart Mill, Friedrich von Hayek, Milton Friedman, John Maynard Keynes,
 398 and Joseph Schumpeter, among others, with an emphasis on the philosophy of
 399 individualism as the American ideal in contrast to the philosophy of collectivism.

400 (g) Instruction in social studies, which combines the study of United States history,
 401 American government and civics, and economics in kindergarten through grade eight, shall
 402 provide age appropriate lessons of the principles and documents of subsections (c), (d), and
 403 (e) of this Code section in instruction, curricula, and activities.

404 20-2-1021.

405 (a) To educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this
 406 country and the values, principles, and philosophies on which this country was founded,
 407 the full week in September which includes Constitution Day, September 17, shall be
 408 recognized in public elementary and middle schools in this state as Celebrate Freedom
 409 Week. Celebrate Freedom Week shall include at least three hours of appropriate
 410 instruction, as determined by each local school system, in each social studies class. The
 411 instruction shall include an age-appropriate, in-depth study of the intent, meaning, and
 412 importance of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution,
 413 including the Bill of Rights, in their historical context including the background of the
 414 colonial era along with instruction about the Founding Fathers, such as the signers of the
 415 Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, the first six Presidents,
 416 and particularly George Washington and key individuals who served with him in war and
 417 in his presidential cabinets. During Celebrate Freedom Week, a local school system shall
 418 require students in grades three through eight to read at least one book that focuses on the
 419 Founding Era, either the times and events or the people who made significant contributions
 420 to independence or toward establishing the new federal or state governments. In addition,
 421 a local school system shall require students in grades three through eight to recite at least
 422 one of the following three excerpts at least once during the week, and local school systems
 423 are encouraged to require daily recitations from one or all of these excerpts at the beginning
 424 of each school day:

425 (1) From the Declaration of Independence:

426 We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are
 427 endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life,
 428 Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness – That to secure these Rights, Governments are
 429 instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed:

430 (2) From the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution:

431 We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish
 432 Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the
 433 general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do
 434 ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.; and

435 (3) From the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights:

436 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the
 437 free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of
 438 the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of
 439 grievances.

440 (b) Upon written request from a student's parent or guardian, a local school system shall
 441 excuse the student from the recitation required by this Code section. This Code section
 442 shall not apply to a student who:

443 (1) Has a conscientious objection to the recitation; or

444 (2) Is the child of a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States
 445 government extends diplomatic immunity.

446 (c) This Code section shall apply beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

447 20-2-1022.

448 (a) To increase student understanding of, and familiarity with, American historical
 449 documents, and to provide curriculum support to classroom teachers of United States
 450 history, American government and civics, economics, and social studies, the Department
 451 of Education shall create an online instructional resource website for teachers, which
 452 should include, but is not limited to, links to websites, foundational documents, and lesson
 453 plan ideas. In addition, the Department of Education shall create an online, age appropriate
 454 resource website for students, which should include, but is not limited to, links to websites,
 455 foundational documents, videos, and student enrichment activities. To facilitate this
 456 process, the Department of Education shall, no later than November 1, 2012, provide the
 457 House Committee on Education and the Senate Education and Youth Committee with a
 458 proposed design of the website, along with a listing of the teacher and student resources
 459 and an estimated cost of implementation. These website resources shall support the
 460 requirements specified in Code Section 20-2-1020.

461 20-2-1023.

462 (a) To increase student understanding of, and familiarity with, American historical
 463 documents, public schools may display historically important excerpts from, or copies of,
 464 those documents in school classrooms and common areas as appropriate. Local boards of
 465 education and charter schools shall allow and may encourage any public school teacher or
 466 administrator to read or post in a public school building, classroom, or event excerpts or
 467 portions of writings, documents, records, or images that reflect the history of the United
 468 States, including, but not limited to:

469 (1) The Preamble to the Georgia Constitution;

470 (2) The Declaration of Independence;

471 (3) The United States Constitution;

472 (4) The Bill of Rights;

473 (5) The Mayflower Compact;

474 (6) The national motto;

475 (7) The Pledge of Allegiance;

476 (8) The National Anthem;

477 (9) The writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the Founding Fathers and
 478 Presidents of the United States;

479 (10) Decisions of the United States Supreme Court;

480 (11) Acts of the Congress of the United States, including the published text of the
 481 Congressional Record; and

482 (12) Other documents of historic significance that have formed or influenced the legal
 483 or governmental system of the United States, including such items as the colonial laws,
 484 charters, Magna Carta, the English Petition of Rights, and the English Bill of Rights.

485 (b) As historical documents, there shall be no content based censorship of American
 486 history and heritage documents referred to in this Code section due to their religious or
 487 cultural nature.

488 20-2-1024.

489 The State Board of Education shall require that all future adopted content standards for
 490 United States history, American government and civics, economics, and social studies
 491 reflect these specified requirements in this article. Full implementation of these adopted
 492 content standards shall begin with the 2014-2015 school year. The State Board of
 493 Education shall provide the House Committee on Education and the Senate Education and
 494 Youth Committee with a progress report which includes the proposed content standards
 495 proposed for adoption on or before December 31, 2012, and again on or before September
 496 1, 2013.

497 20-2-1025.

498 The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level curriculum based
499 tests, any end-of-course tests, and any criterion-referenced competency tests developed and
500 administered state wide in United States history, American government and civics,
501 economics, and social studies beginning with the 2014-2015 school year include questions
502 to reflect the priorities of Code Section 20-2-1020.

503 20-2-1026.

504 (a) No later than October 1, 2012, the Professional Standards Commission, in cooperation
505 with the Department of Education, shall provide the House Committee on Education and
506 the Senate Education and Youth Committee with a proposal for a 30 hour online
507 professional learning course for teachers for the purpose of providing training on the
508 instruction, activities, and curricula specified in Code Section 20-2-1020. The course
509 should be designed for easy adaptation to on-site instruction opportunities. Such proposal
510 shall include an estimated cost of implementation for course development and the online
511 management system of delivery. The Professional Standards Commission, in cooperation
512 with the Department of Education, shall submit any final changes to funding estimates to
513 the House Committee on Education and the Senate Education and Youth Committee no
514 later than January 5, 2013, for consideration during the 2013 regular session of the General
515 Assembly prior to implementation.

516 (b) In satisfying the requirements of this Code section, the Professional Standards
517 Commission and the State Board of Education may:

518 (1) Develop a course that is administered internally by the Department of Education
519 which meets the requirements in Code Section 20-2-1020; or

520 (2) Identify existing courses which are currently able to provide the online content,
521 resources, and training that meet the requirements in Code Section 20-2-1020.

522 (c) No contracts may be entered into pursuant to this Code section, however, until the
523 General Assembly has appropriated funding for this purpose.

524 20-2-1027.

525 The Department of Education and the Professional Standards Commission shall submit a
526 biennial report by September 1 of each odd-numbered year to the House Committee on
527 Education and the Senate Education and Youth Committee regarding the implementation
528 of this article."

529

SECTION 2.

530 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.