

The House Committee on Education offers the following substitute to SB 68:

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 establish Celebrate Freedom Week; to provide
3 for the posting of historical documents; to require the Department of Education to develop
4 online resources and instructional support; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting
5 laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

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

10 "ARTICLE 19A

11 20-2-1020.

12 (a) To educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this
13 country and the values, principles, and philosophies on which this country was founded,
14 the full week in September which includes Constitution Day, September 17, shall be
15 recognized in public elementary, middle, and high schools in this state as Celebrate
16 Freedom Week. Celebrate Freedom Week shall include approximately three hours of
17 appropriate instruction, as determined by each local school system, in each social studies
18 class. The instruction shall include an age-appropriate study of the intent, meaning, and
19 importance of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution,
20 including the Bill of Rights, in their historical context including the background of the
21 colonial era along with instruction about the Founding Fathers, such as the signers of the
22 Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, the first six Presidents,
23 and particularly George Washington. The religious references in the writings of the
24 Founding Fathers shall not be censored. During Celebrate Freedom Week, a local school
25 system shall suggest that students in grades three through 12 read at least one book during

26 the school year that focuses on the Founding Era, either the times and events or the people
 27 who made significant contributions to independence or toward establishing the new federal
 28 or state governments. In addition, a local school system may recommend that students in
 29 grades three through 12 recite at least one of the following excerpts:

30 (1) From the Declaration of Independence:

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

35 (2) From the Preamble of the United States Constitution:

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

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

41 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the
 42 free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of
 43 the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of
 44 grievances; or

45 (4) Excerpts from the Fourteenth Amendment and the Nineteenth Amendment to the
 46 United States Constitution.

47 (b) This Code section shall apply beginning with the 2014-2015 school year.

48 20-2-1021.

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

56 (1) The Preamble to the Georgia Constitution;

57 (2) The Declaration of Independence;

58 (3) The United States Constitution;

59 (4) The Bill of Rights;

60 (5) The Mayflower Compact;

61 (6) The national motto;

62 (7) The Pledge of Allegiance;

63 (8) The National Anthem;

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

66 (10) Decisions of the United States Supreme Court; and

67 (11) Acts of the Congress of the United States, including the published text of the
68 Congressional Record.

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

72 20-2-1022.

73 To increase student understanding of, and familiarity with, American historical documents
74 and to provide curriculum support to classroom teachers of United States history, American
75 government and civics, economics, and social studies, the Department of Education shall
76 create an online instructional resource page or pages for teachers, which may include, but
77 is not limited to, links to websites, foundational documents, and lesson plan ideas. At a
78 minimum, such resource page or pages shall include the items in paragraphs (1) through
79 (11) of subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-1021 and shall focus on the foundational
80 principles of limited constitutional government, federalism, religious liberty, freedom of
81 speech, the right to private property, free enterprise, and the rule of law. There shall be no
82 content based censorship of American history, writings of the Founding Fathers, or heritage
83 documents referred to in this Code section due to their religious or cultural nature. The
84 online teacher resource page shall be completed and made easily available to teachers no
85 later than July 31, 2013. The online teacher resource page shall support the requirements
86 specified in Code Section 20-2-1020."

87 **SECTION 2.**

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