**South Carolina General Assembly**

124th Session, 2021-2022

**S. 534**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senators Loftis and Rice

Document Path: l:\council\bills\rt\17967wab21.docx

Introduced in the Senate on February 9, 2021

Currently residing in the Senate Committee on **Education**

Summary: Education: Restore America's Foundation Act

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

2/9/2021 Senate Introduced and read first time ([Senate Journal‑page 5](file:///h:\sj\20210209.docx))

2/9/2021 Senate Referred to Committee on **Education** ([Senate Journal‑page 5](file:///h:\sj\20210209.docx))

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[2/9/2021](file:///p:\pprever\2021-22\534_20210209.docx)

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, SO AS TO ENACT THE “RESTORE AMERICA’S FOUNDATION ACT” BY AMENDING SECTION 59‑29‑120, RELATING TO AMERICAN FOUNDING PRINCIPLES INSTRUCTION REQUIRED IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS AND PUBLICLY SUPPORTED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, SO AS TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING INSTRUCTION IN UNITED STATES FOUNDATIONAL HISTORY IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS; TO AMEND SECTION 59‑120‑130, RELATING TO THE DURATION OF REQUIRED AMERICAN FOUNDING PRINCIPLES INSTRUCTION, SO AS TO LIMIT ITS APPLICATION WITH RESPECT TO PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING; TO AMEND SECTION 59‑29‑140, RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION PRESCRIBE CERTAIN TEXTS FOR USE IN REQUIRED AMERICAN FOUNDING PRINCIPLES INSTRUCTION, SO AS TO SPECIFY CERTAIN TEXTS THAT MUST BE INCLUDED; TO AMEND SECTION 59‑29‑155, RELATING TO RELATED REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES; AND TO MAKE THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the “Restore America’s Foundation Act”.

SECTION 2. Section 59‑29‑120 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding subsections to read:

“(D) A school district, starting in the sixth grade and continuing through the twelfth grade, annually shall provide instruction in United States foundational history, as defined in this subsection, for a minimum of thirty hours of classroom instruction. This annual instruction in United States foundational history must be divided into four sections with each section consisting of no less than five hours of classroom instruction time, allocated as follows:

(1) The first section shall examine both the events leading up to the War for Independence and its causes and include, but not be limited to, the French and Indian War; the life of young George Washington, including the Native American legend of his divine protection; American resistance to increased British regulation and taxation; debates between colonists and the British government about the authority of Parliament to make laws for and impose taxes on the colonists; the military occupation of Boston and the Boston Massacre, including Crispus Attucks, the Boston Tea Party, the Intolerable Acts, and the preparation of the colonists for armed conflict; Patrick Henry’s ‘Liberty or Death’ speech; and the Continental Congress;

(2) The second section shall examine the War for Independence including, but not limited to, the Battles of Lexington and Concord; the Siege of Boston and the Battle of Bunker Hill; the defense of Fort Sullivan, including the importance of Carolina Day; the loss of New York City; the victories at Trenton and Princeton; the victory at Saratoga; the training and reorganization of the army at Valley Forge; the French alliance; the Battle of Monmouth; successful American resistance to British efforts to crush the Revolution in the South, including the sieges of Savannah and Charleston, Battle of Camden, Battle of King’s Mountain, the campaign of Francis Marion, contributions of African American soldiers, the Yorktown campaign, the disbanding of the Continental Army, the Treaty of Peace, and Washington’s resignation;

(3) The third section shall examine America’s political philosophy including, but not limited to, the influence of John Locke on the founders; the concept of God‑given rights; Thomas Jefferson and the drafting of the Declaration of Independence; Thomas Paine’s ‘Common Sense’; the arguments for and against independence in Congress; the vote on independence; the creation of American republics, including the nature of republics, the idea of sovereignty and the sovereignty of the people, the first state constitutions, and the Articles of Confederation as a cooperative compact between independent republics; the implementation of republican ideals in law, including the protection of natural and civil rights, exemplified by the Virginia Bill of Rights, the emergence of antislavery sentiment, exemplified by the Pennsylvania Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery, the spread of religious liberty, exemplified by the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, and expanded opportunities for personal independence through land ownership, exemplified by the Northwest Ordinance; the framing and implementation of the United States Constitution, including Shays’ Rebellion, the problem of the public debt, the Federal Convention, the ratification of the United States Constitution, including the debates between the Federalists and the Antifederalists, the inauguration of George Washington, adoption of the Bill of Rights, including the philosophical underpinnings of each amendment as expressed by the founders and George Washington’s Farewell Address; and

(4) The fourth section shall examine the legacy of the American Revolution. The aim of this section is to ensure that students understand how the ideals of the American Revolution have shaped American life for nearly two hundred and fifty years. This section is not a substitute for instruction on American national history, but instead provides a framework for understanding the enduring and pervasive influence of the Revolution. The topics covered shall include the Revolution and American national identity, embodied in shared national history, symbols, and common heroes, as well as the relationship of the Revolution and its ideals to expanding political participation, the abolition of slavery, and the campaign for women’s rights, including the Seneca Falls Convention, passage of the thirteenth and nineteenth amendments and Dr. Martin Luther King’s ‘I Have a Dream’ speech. This section also shall distinguish between American self‑government and communism, including the philosophical differences on the right to free speech, the right to bear arms and the right to religious expression and private property. America’s fight against communism also shall be studied within the context of key foreign policy events such as the Berlin Airlift, the Berlin Wall, the Tiananmen Square protests, and America’s relationship with Taiwan. The broad purpose of this subsection is to ensure that students understand the enduring influence of the American Revolution in U.S. history including its foreign policy.

(E) Each year, prior to the Thanksgiving holiday, all public schools shall read the original account of the first Thanksgiving feast as recorded by pilgrim Edward Winslow. In grades six through twelve, students also shall read and discuss the Thanksgiving proclamations of President George Washington and President Abraham Lincoln, alternating annually between each proclamation.”

SECTION 3. Section 59‑29‑130 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59‑29‑130. The instruction provided for in Section 59‑29‑120(A) ~~shall~~ must be given for at least one year ~~of the high school, college and university grades, respectively~~ in public institutions of higher learning. In addition to the instructional requirements provided in Section 59‑29‑120(D), each topic listed within that subsection must be fully covered at least once every three years except that instruction on the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, and the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, must be provided annually.”

SECTION 4. Section 59‑29‑140 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59‑29‑140. The State Superintendent of Education shall make due arrangements for carrying out the provisions of Sections 59‑29‑120 and 59‑29‑130. For such purpose the State Superintendent shall review and prescribe suitable texts and online materials aligned with the principles and concepts of the January 2021 report of the 1776 Commission adapted to the needs of the high schools, universities, and colleges for the instruction required under Sections 59‑29‑120 and 59‑29‑130. The State Superintendent’s review process shall examine materials from organizations and institutions dedicated to promoting knowledge and appreciation for America’s founding. A report detailing the review process and its conclusions shall be submitted to the Senate Education Committee and the House Education and Public Works Committee by October 15, 2021.”

SECTION 5. Section 59‑29‑155(A) and (B) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) The State Board of Education and Education Oversight Committee shall incorporate instruction ~~on the founding principles that shaped the United States into the required study of the United States Constitution~~ as provided in Section 59‑29‑120, and the South Carolina Social Studies Standards upon the next cyclical review. ~~The board and committee shall include, at a minimum, the Federalist Papers and instruction on the structure of government and the role of the separation of powers and the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution.~~

(B) The State Department of Education biennially shall submit a report by October fifteenth of each odd‑numbered year, commencing in ~~2017~~ 2021, to the Senate Education Committee and the House Education and Public Works Committee documenting the implementation of this section.”

SECTION 6. This act takes effect on July 1, 2021.

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