

HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1()

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): SENATORS STEVENS, Giessel, MacKinnon, Bishop, Micciche, Coghill, Hoffman, Gardner

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to a legislative task force on civics education.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 **WHEREAS** research shows that one of the most significant ways schools can foster
4 youth civic engagement is by providing students with opportunities to engage in reflective
5 civic action through their classes and cocurricular and extracurricular activities; and

6 **WHEREAS**, rather than providing a single course in civics, educators should provide
7 civics learning activities from preschool through college, informed by best practices that
8 develop civics knowledge based on an understanding of the values of the nation's founders as
9 revealed in the nation's founding documents, including knowledge of our system of
10 government and how it works, and civics skills, including intellectual and participatory skills
11 necessary for an active civic life; and

12 **WHEREAS** opportunities for students to engage in real-world learning activities can
13 enhance the civic development of students and provide authentic learning experiences; and

14 **WHEREAS** research suggests that educators who include in their pedagogy a
15 component of civil service opportunities may better help students achieve greater levels of
16 academic success and increased motivation; and

1 **WHEREAS** the state can help encourage schools to provide civil service
2 opportunities for all students in a manner that complements the standards that schools set and
3 the assessments and accountability measures the state chooses;

4 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Task Force on Civics
5 Education be established as a joint task force of the Alaska State Legislature for the purpose
6 of studying the current state of civics education and making recommendations for the
7 improvement of civics education for students in the state; and be it

8 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the duties of the task force include

9 (1) analyzing the current state of civics education in the state;
10 (2) analyzing current civics education laws in other jurisdictions;
11 (3) identifying best practices in civics education in other jurisdictions;
12 (4) studying and making recommendations about how to increase and improve
13 civics education in kindergarten through grade 12 in public schools in the state;

14 (5) evaluating the merits of and implementation requirements for requiring
15 high school seniors to take and pass the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the
16 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services under 8 U.S.C. 1446(b) as a prerequisite
17 for graduating from high school;

18 (6) reviewing the merits of and considering options for implementing the
19 Every Student Succeeds Act, P. L. No. 114-95 (2015), as it pertains to civics education in the
20 state;

21 (7) making recommendations to the legislature relating to substantially
22 increasing civics literacy and the capacity of youth to obtain the requisite knowledge and
23 skills to be civically informed members of the public;

24 (8) making funding recommendations related to the task force's
25 recommendations to the legislature;

26 (9) submitting a report to the secretary of the senate and the chief clerk of the
27 house of representatives by January 19, 2017, summarizing the findings and recommendations
28 of the task force and notifying the members of the legislature that the report is available; and
29 be it

30 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force consist of 12 members as follows:

31 (1) three members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of

1 the house of representatives, including one member of the minority organizational caucus;

2 (2) three members of the senate appointed by the president of the senate,
3 including one member of the minority organizational caucus;

4 (3) the commissioner of education and early development or the
5 commissioner's designee;

6 (4) five members of the public appointed jointly by the speaker of the house of
7 representatives and the president of the senate as follows:

8 (A) one active or retired high school teacher with significant teaching
9 experience in civics or social studies education in the state;

10 (B) one member representing the Association of Alaska School
11 Boards;

12 (C) one member who is a student enrolled in good standing in a public
13 high school who will be a senior in the school on the date of the first meeting of the
14 task force; the student must demonstrate an interest in civics education and leadership;

15 (D) one member who is a judge or otherwise represents the judicial
16 branch of state government;

17 (E) one member representing the University of Alaska; and be it

18 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that

19 (1) the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate
20 jointly appoint the chair of the task force from among the legislative members of the task
21 force;

22 (2) a majority of the task force constitute a quorum;

23 (3) a vacancy on the task force be filled in the same manner as the original
24 selection or appointment;

25 (4) the task force meet at the call of the chair;

26 (5) the task force may request data and other information from the Department
27 of Education and Early Development, school districts, and other state agencies; and be it

28 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the staff of the legislator who chairs the task force
29 provide administrative and other support to the task force; and be it

30 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that members of the task force serve without compensation
31 but be entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized for boards and commissions under

1 AS 39.20.180; and be it

2 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force expires on June 30, 2017.