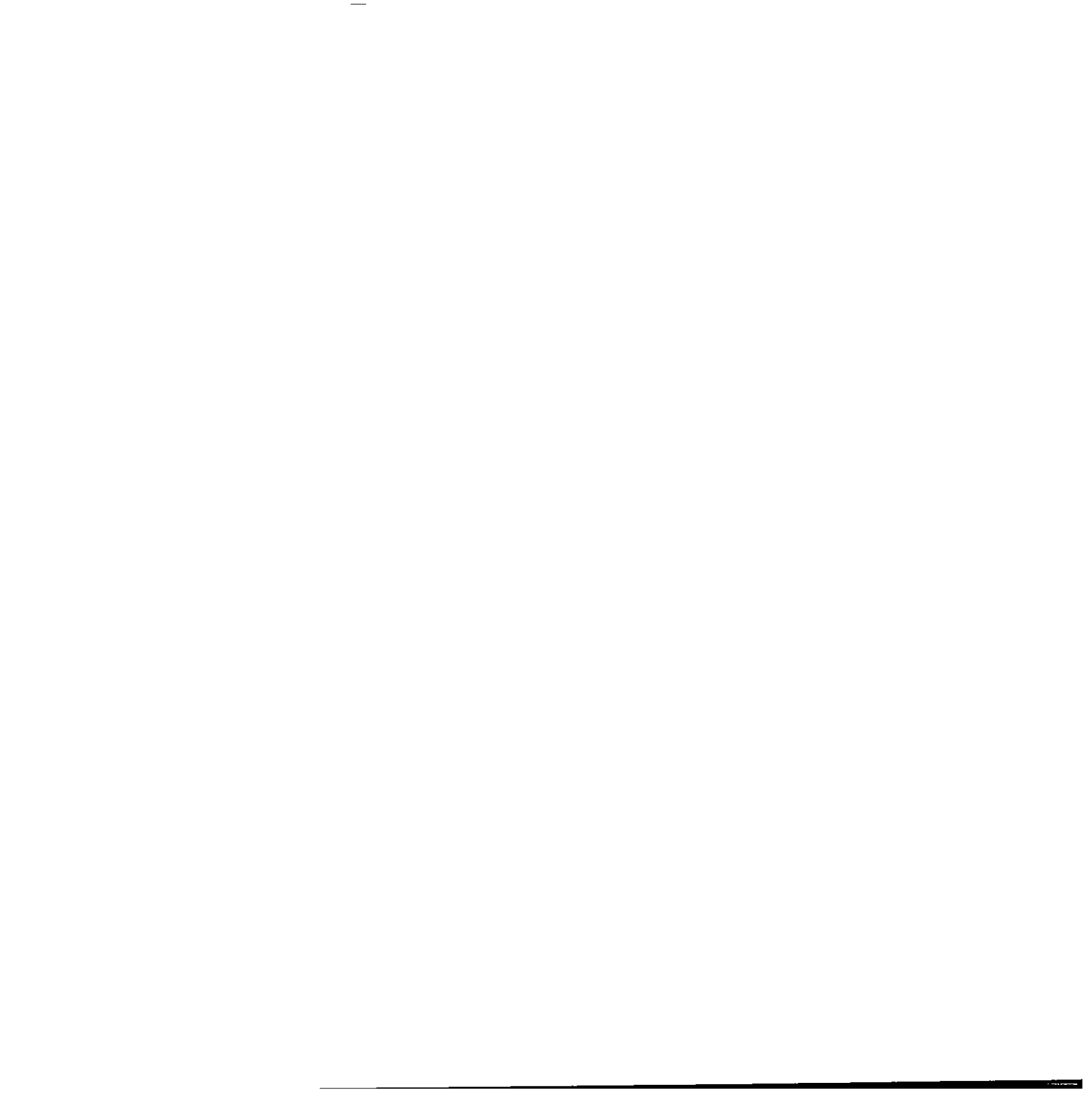


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Senator Gary Stevens

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 14, 2015

TO: Representative Wes Keller, Chair
House Education Committee

FROM: Senator Gary Stevens, Chair
Legislative Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "G. Stevens", written over the "FROM" line.

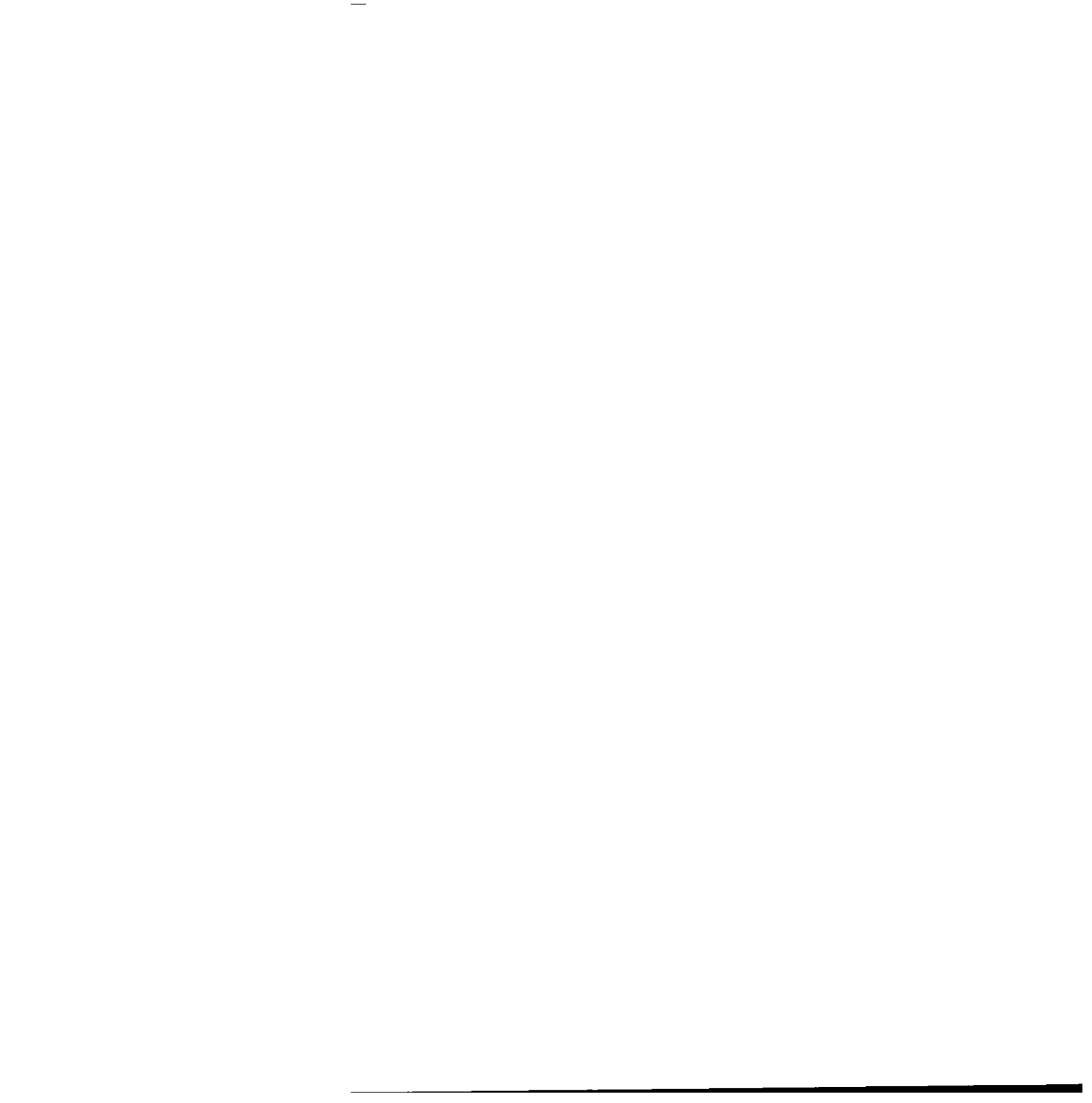
RE: Hearing Request for SCR 1 - Civics Education Task Force

I respectfully request Senate Concurrent Resolution 1, establishing a legislative task force on civics education, be scheduled for a hearing before the House Education Committee.

Attached you will find the most recent version of the bill, the current sponsor statement, and some supporting documentation. I would be happy to provide more background information, as well as a list of individuals to assist in testifying on the subject when the time comes to hear the resolution.

Please contact Mr. Tim Lamkin in my office by calling 465-2705 or writing to: tim.lamkin@akleg.gov if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration of this important piece of legislation.





SPONSOR STATEMENT

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 1

"Relating to a Legislative Task Force on Civics Education."

SCR 1 creates a task force to carefully examine and improve awareness of the importance of civics education in our state. What is the condition of civics education in Alaska? What are other states doing? Given Alaska's current budget climate, how can we improve our approach to civics education in Alaska without adding to the cost of delivering it? These are questions worth exploring.

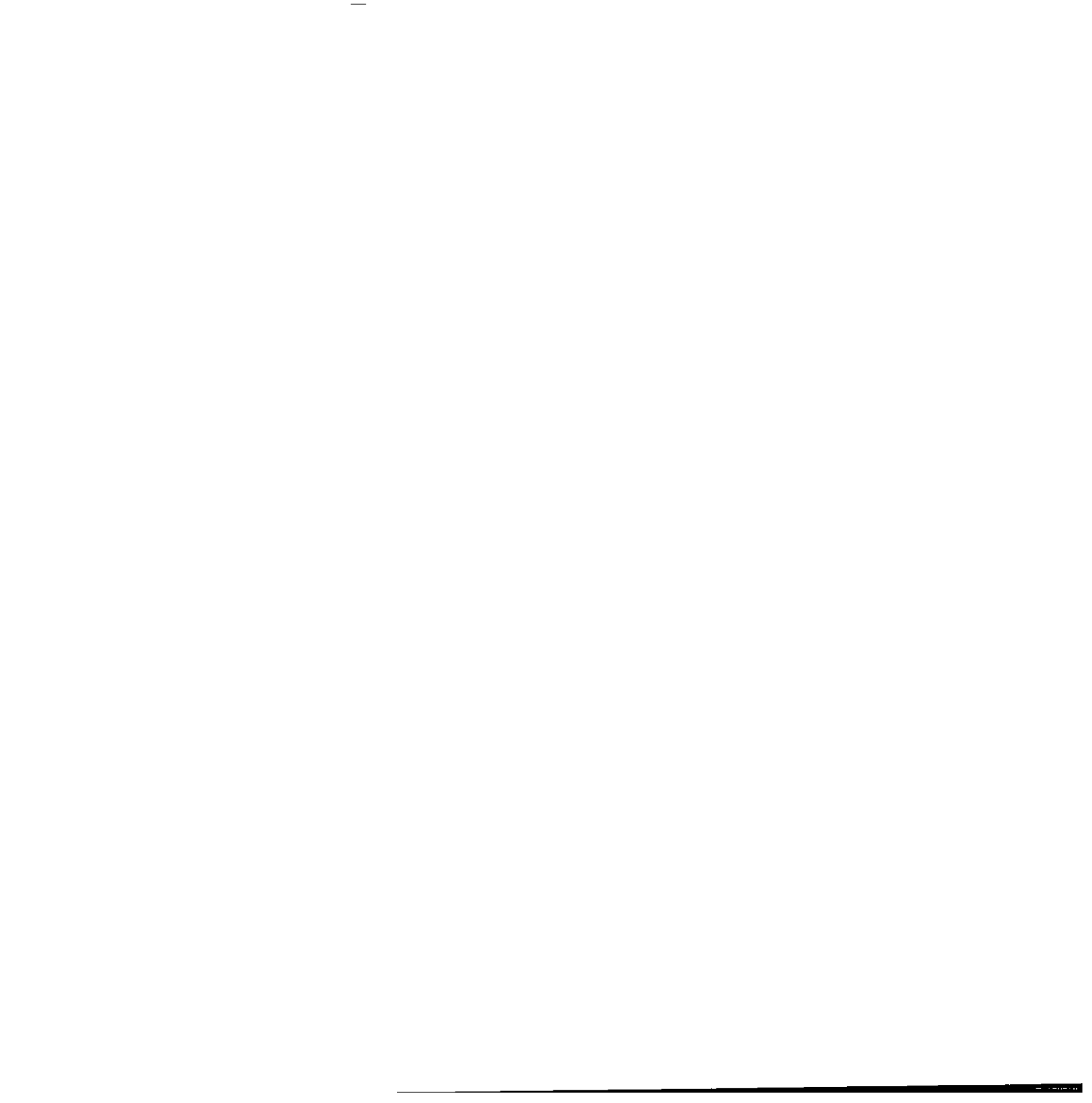
While most Americans agree on the importance of preparing young people for citizenship in a democracy, civic education has received less and less attention in schools over the past couple of decades. During that time, schools have focused their attention first on preparing students for college and jobs, and more recently on responding to increasing accountability demands, primarily in mathematics, reading, and writing. Experts believe a decline in civic engagement, such as the decline in voting rates among young voters since 18-year-olds were given the right to vote in 1972, may be a direct result of the decrease in emphasis placed on civics.

In one response to this decline in civic engagement, most states developed content standards in civics or government in the 1990s and early 2000s to ensure that students acquired a basic understanding of how government works, of the documents on which American democracy is based, and of basic democratic values. Unlike state efforts to improve instruction in the core academic disciplines, however, most states have not established statewide assessments aligned with their civics standards. A number of states recently have established legislative committees or task forces to examine their civic education practices and make recommendations to the legislature, the state education agency, and their public schools.

While many individuals and organizations have sought to address the poor condition of civic education, the problem remains acute. Strong state policies are needed to establish and reinforce the fact that preparation for civic life is equally as important as, and important for, preparation for higher education and careers. In fact, preparation for active citizenship was a foundational principle of public education in America from its beginning, and it is a principle that must be reaffirmed by each generation.

By passing SCR 1, Alaska will join in with other states in an effort to restore attention to the importance of civics education in our schools.

I appreciate your consideration of this legislation.



Civics Education Task Force

Proposed Language Change

PART 1:

Page 2, Line 1, following “for all students”

DELETE: “through”

INSERT: “in such a way so as to compliment”

(Intent: Per Rep. Seaton’s request to clarify the TF will not be adopting new state standards for civics education.)

PART 2

Page 2, Line 31

DELETE: “one member of the National Education Association who is a”

INSERT: “one current or retired high school”

Page 3, Line 1, following “social studies education”

INSERT: “in Alaska”

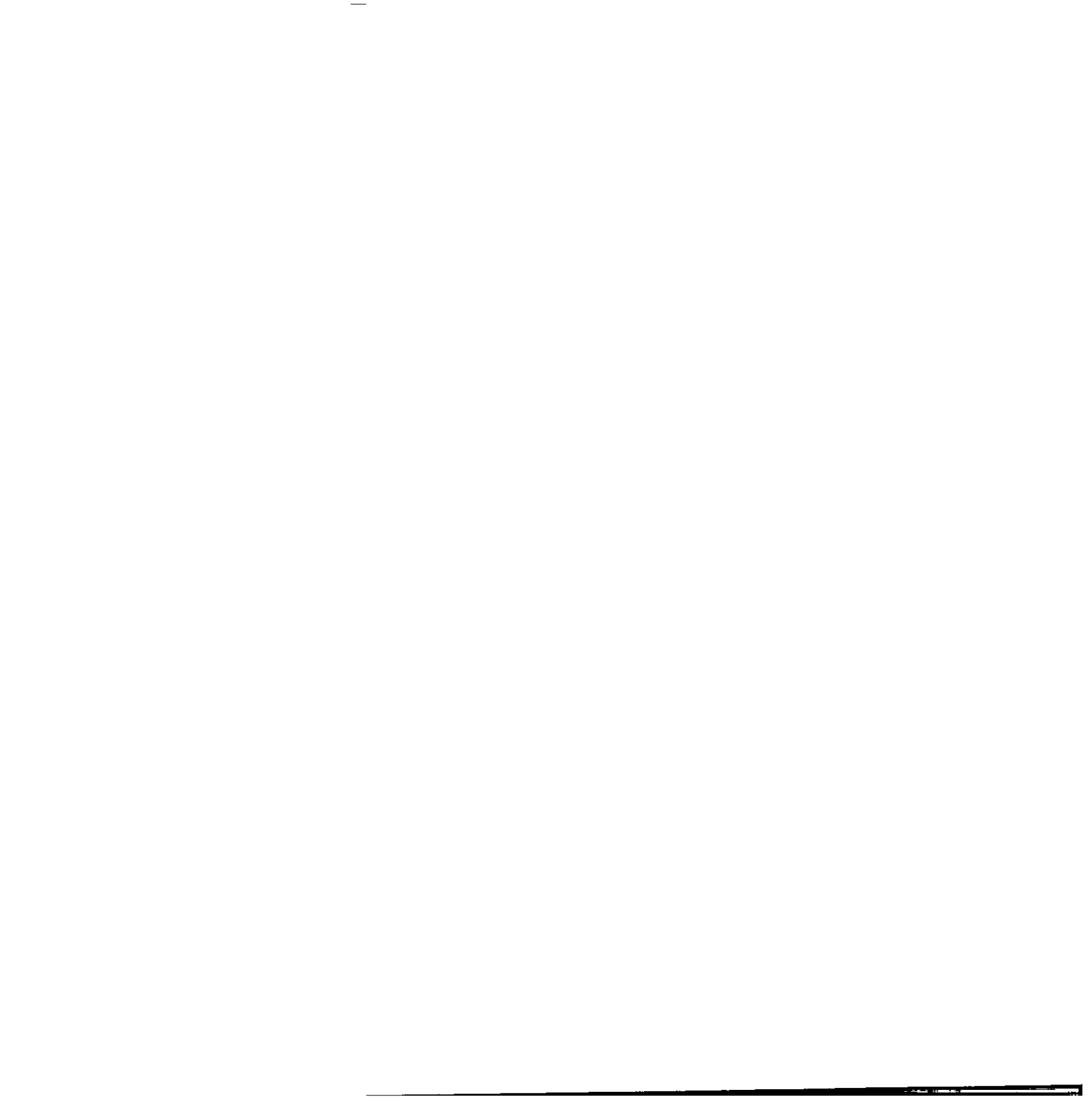
(Result: “one current or retired high school teacher with significant teaching experience in civics or socials studies education in Alaska;”)

Page 2, Line 11, following (4)

INSERT: "evaluate the merits of and implementation requirements for requiring high school seniors to take and satisfactorily pass the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services under 8 U.S.C. 1446(b) as a contingency of graduating from high school;

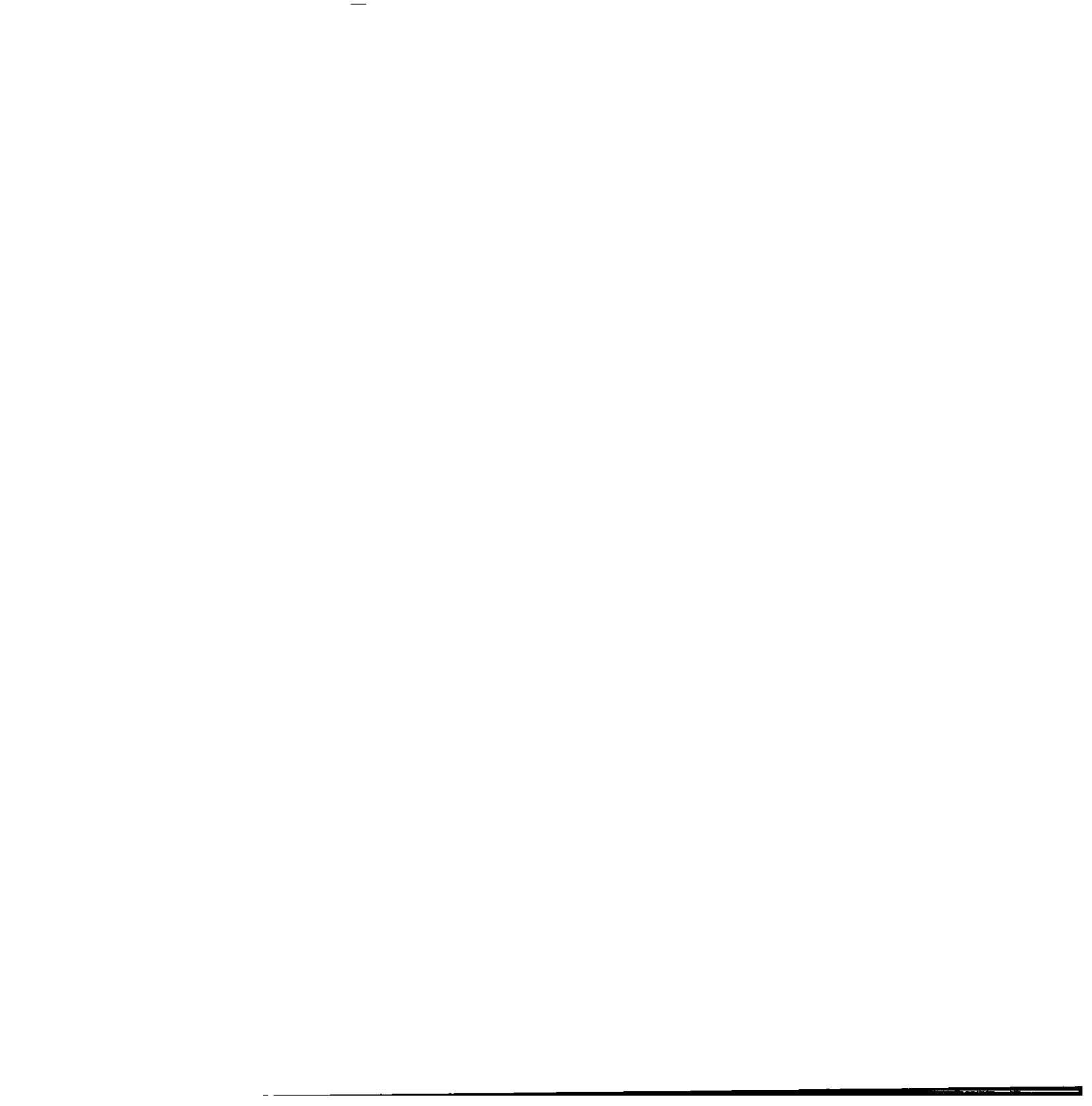
[renumber the remaining subsections accordingly]

(Intent: Incorporate the goal behind HB89)



CHANGES

- 1) P 1, L 16 delete [ENSURE] insert encourage
- 2) P 1, L 8 inset after the word "knowledge" based on an understanding of the values of our founders that are revealed in our founding documents, including...
- 3) P 2, L 31 Delete [OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



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

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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.**

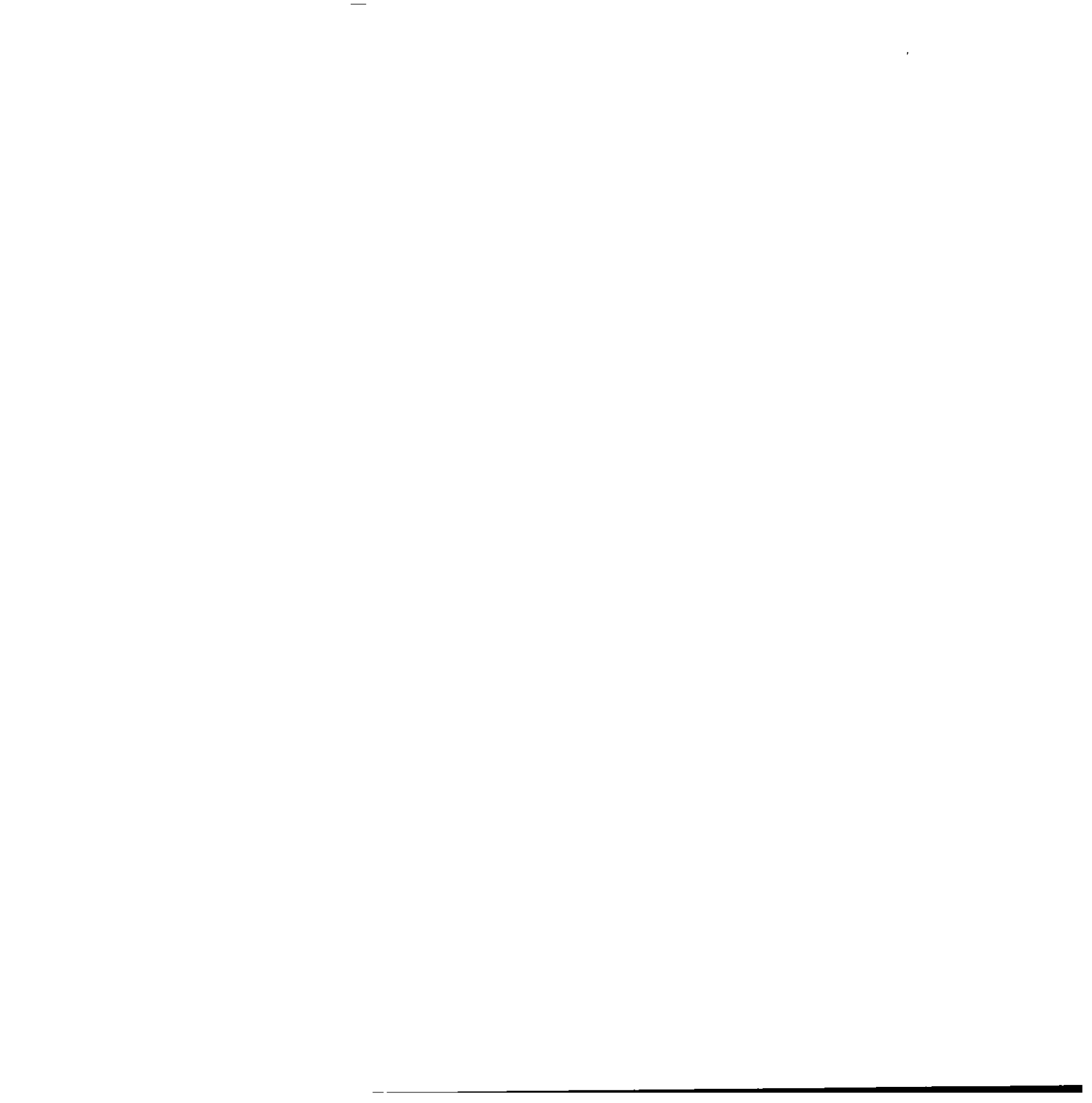
2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

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



3 the assessments and accountability measures the state chooses;

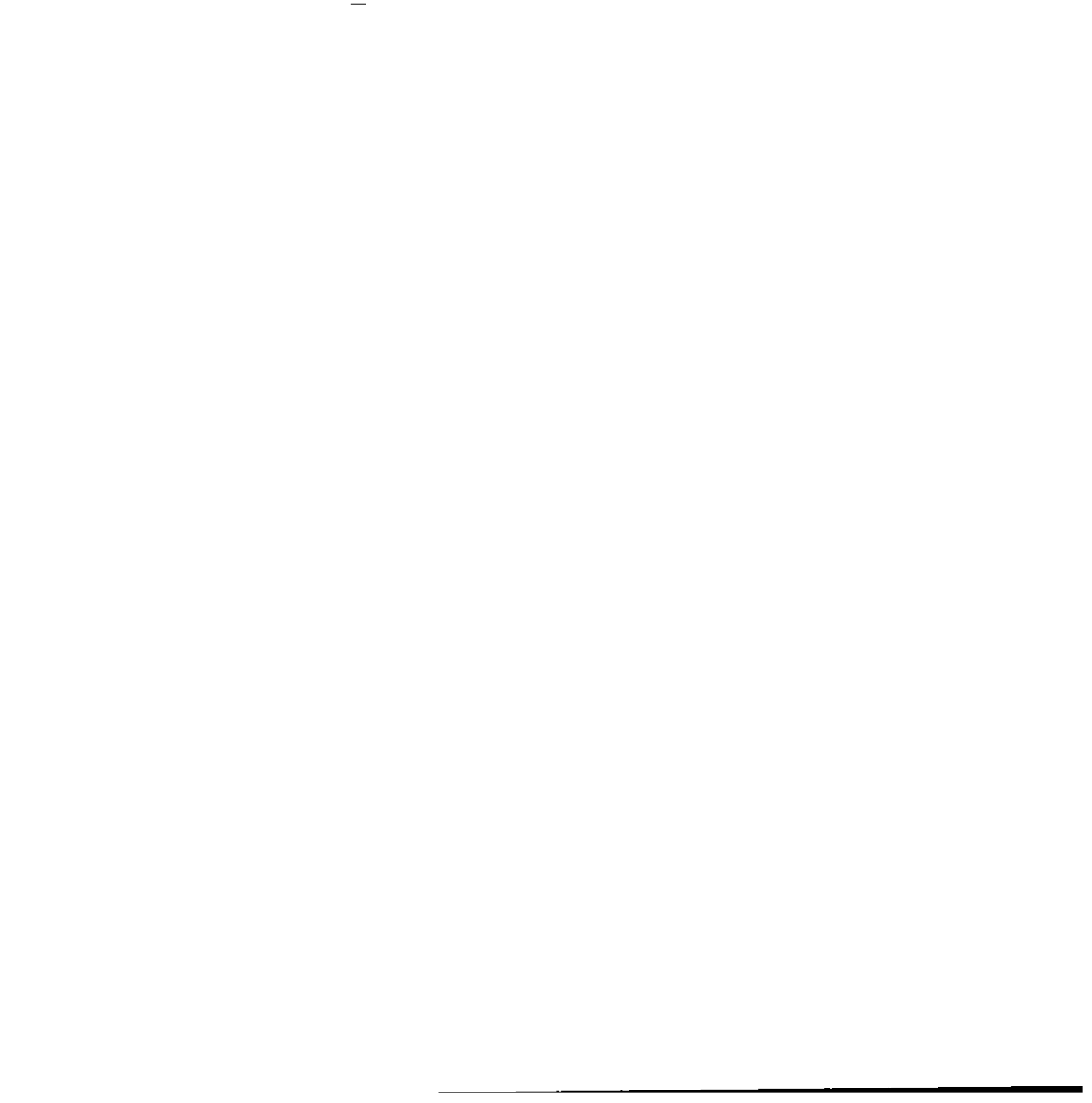
4 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Task Force on Civics
5 Education be established as a joint task force of the Alaska State Legislature for the purpose
6 of studying the current state of civics education and making recommendations for the
7 improvement of civics education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



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
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21 force;

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

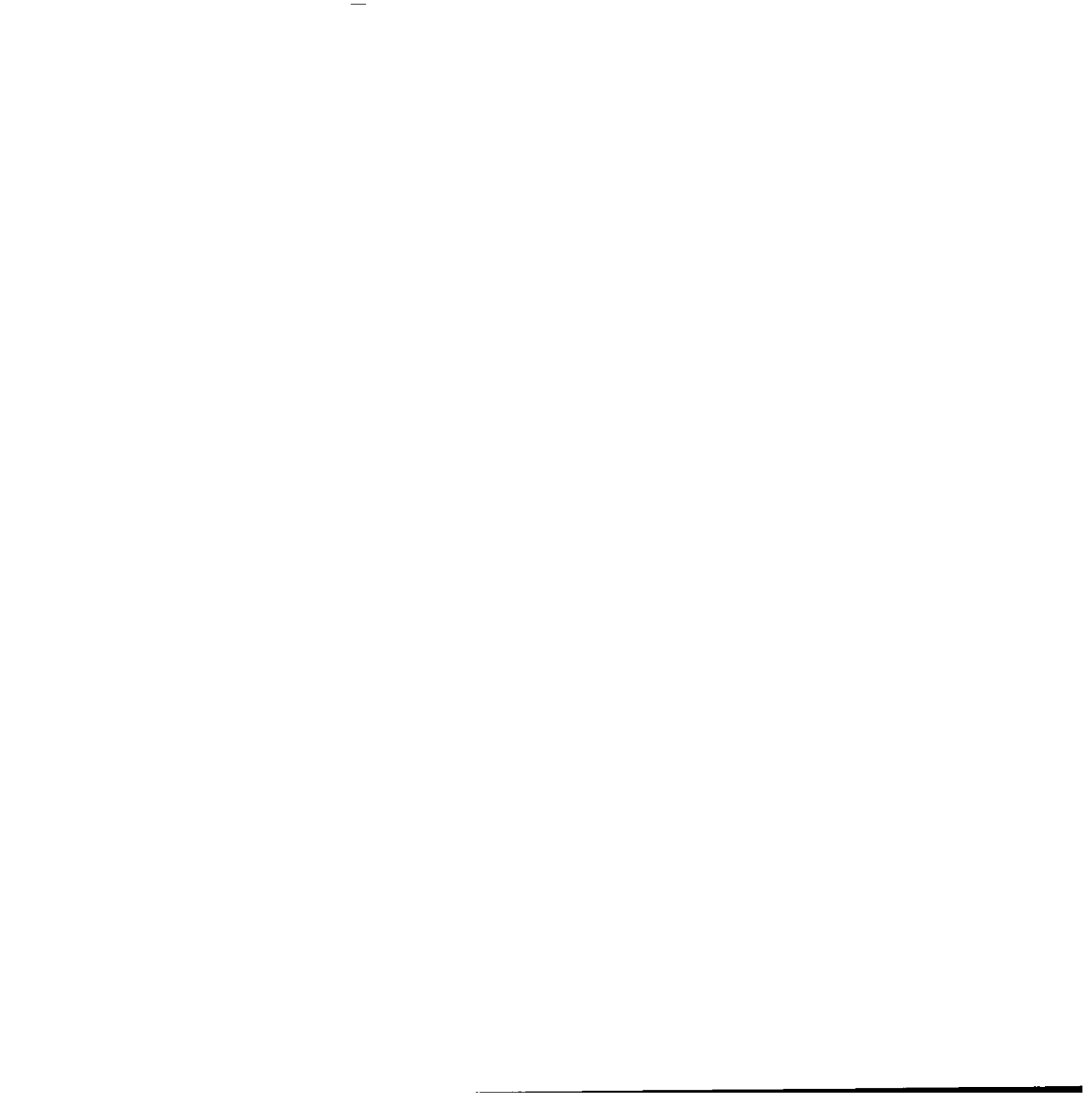
23 (3) a vacancy on the task force be filled in the same manner as the original
24 selection or appointment;

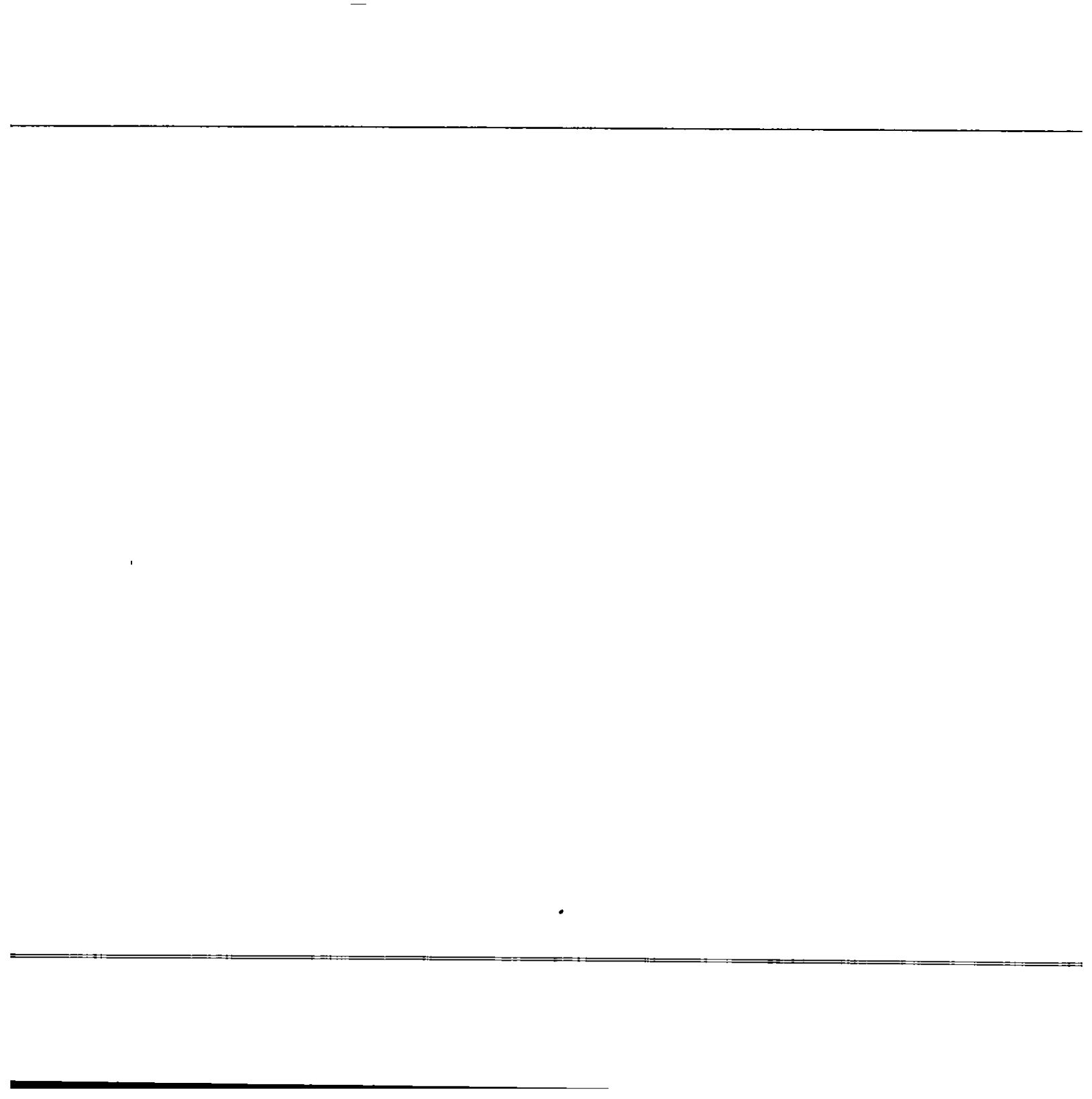
25 (4) the task force meet at the call of the chair;

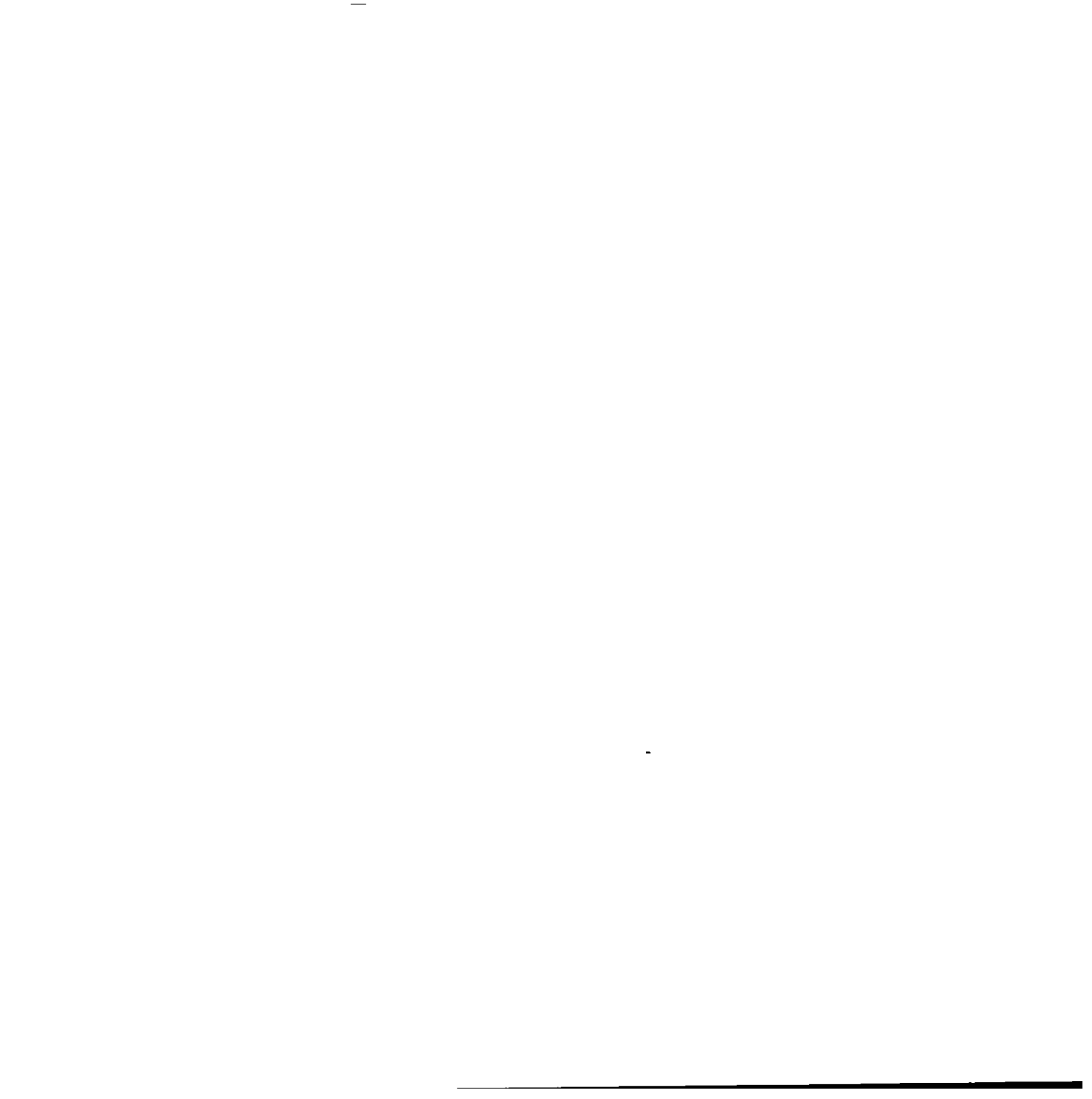
26 (5) the task force may request data and other information from the Department
27 of Education and Early Development, school districts, and other state agencies; and be it

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







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

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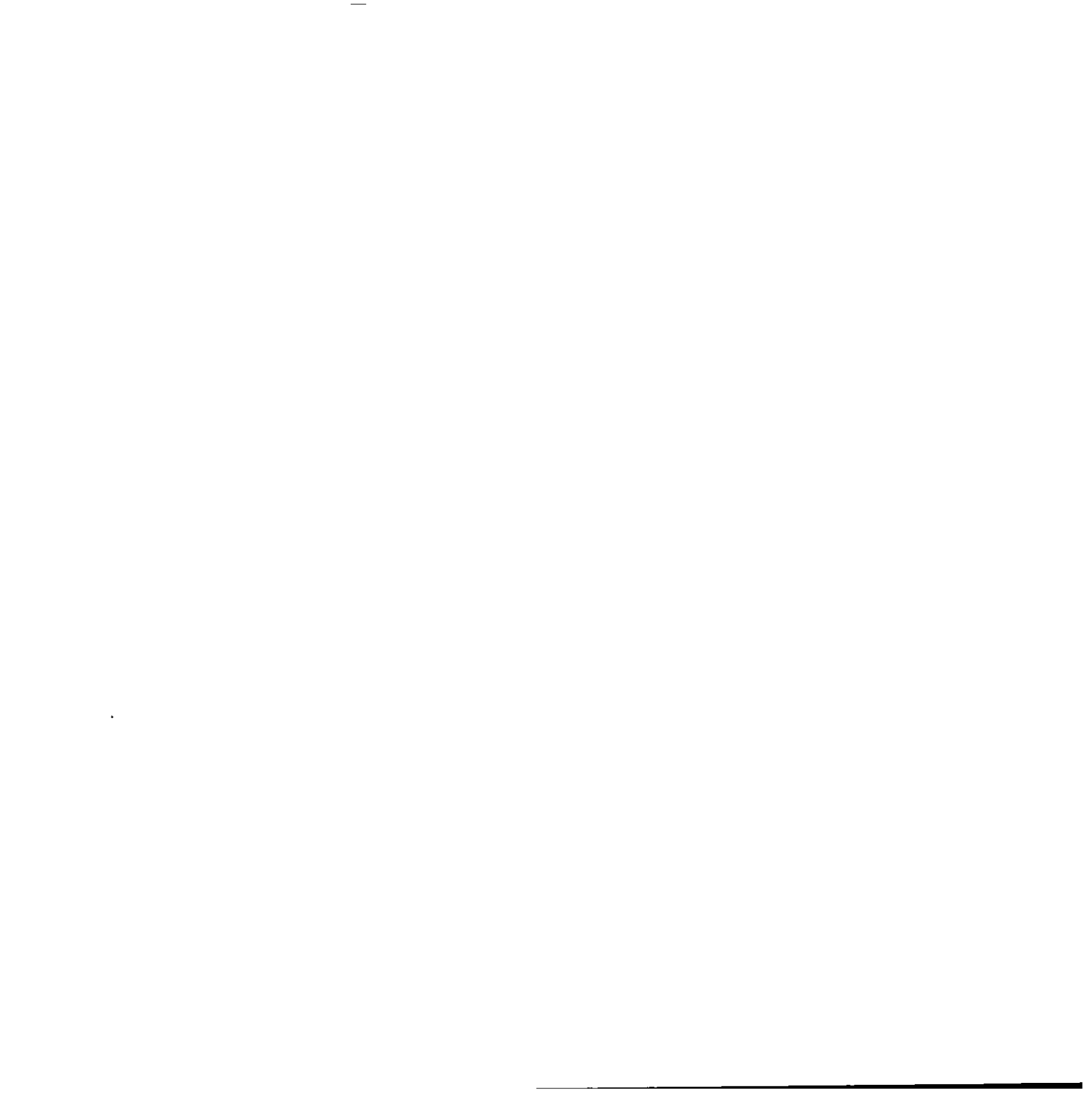
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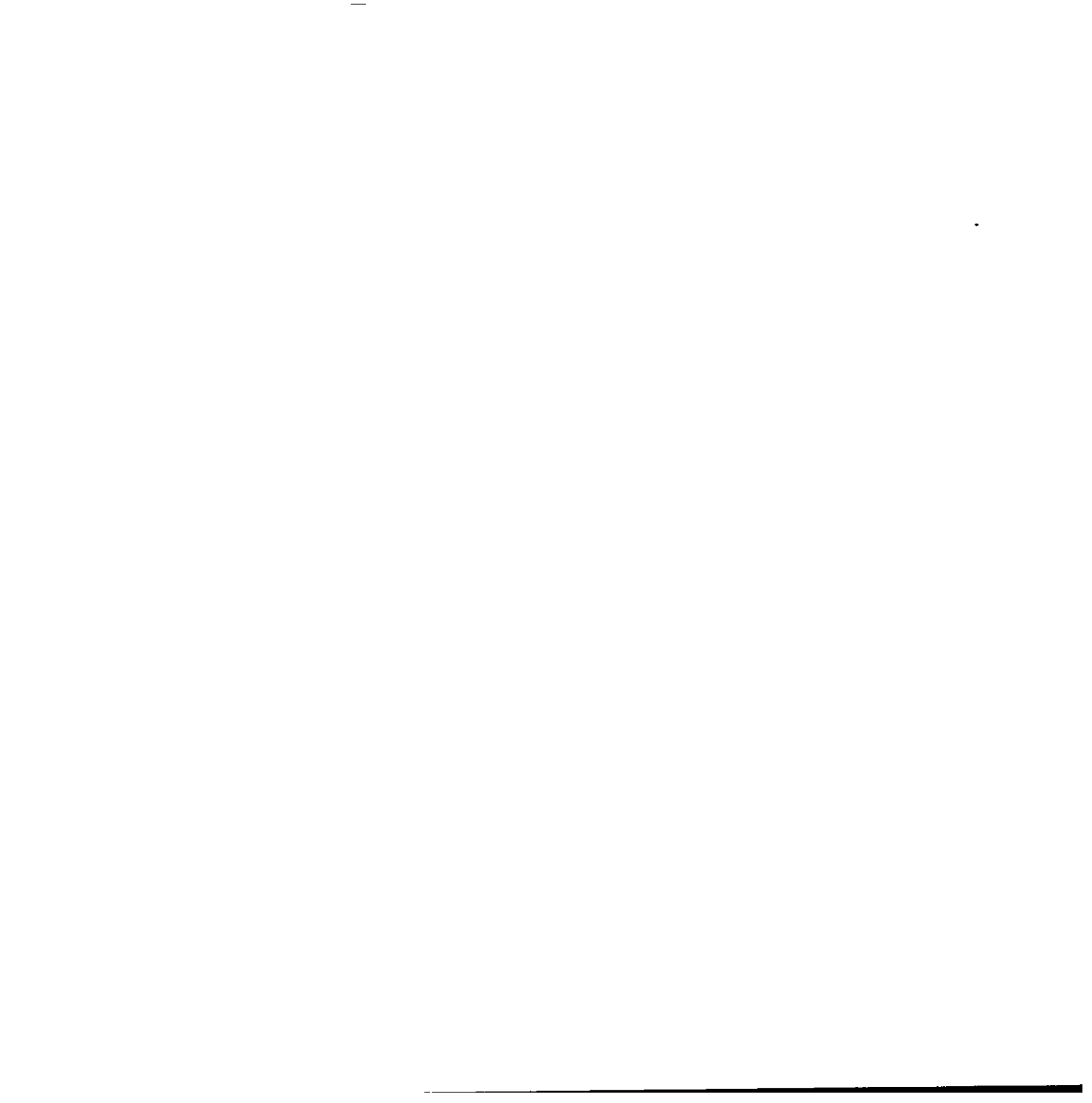
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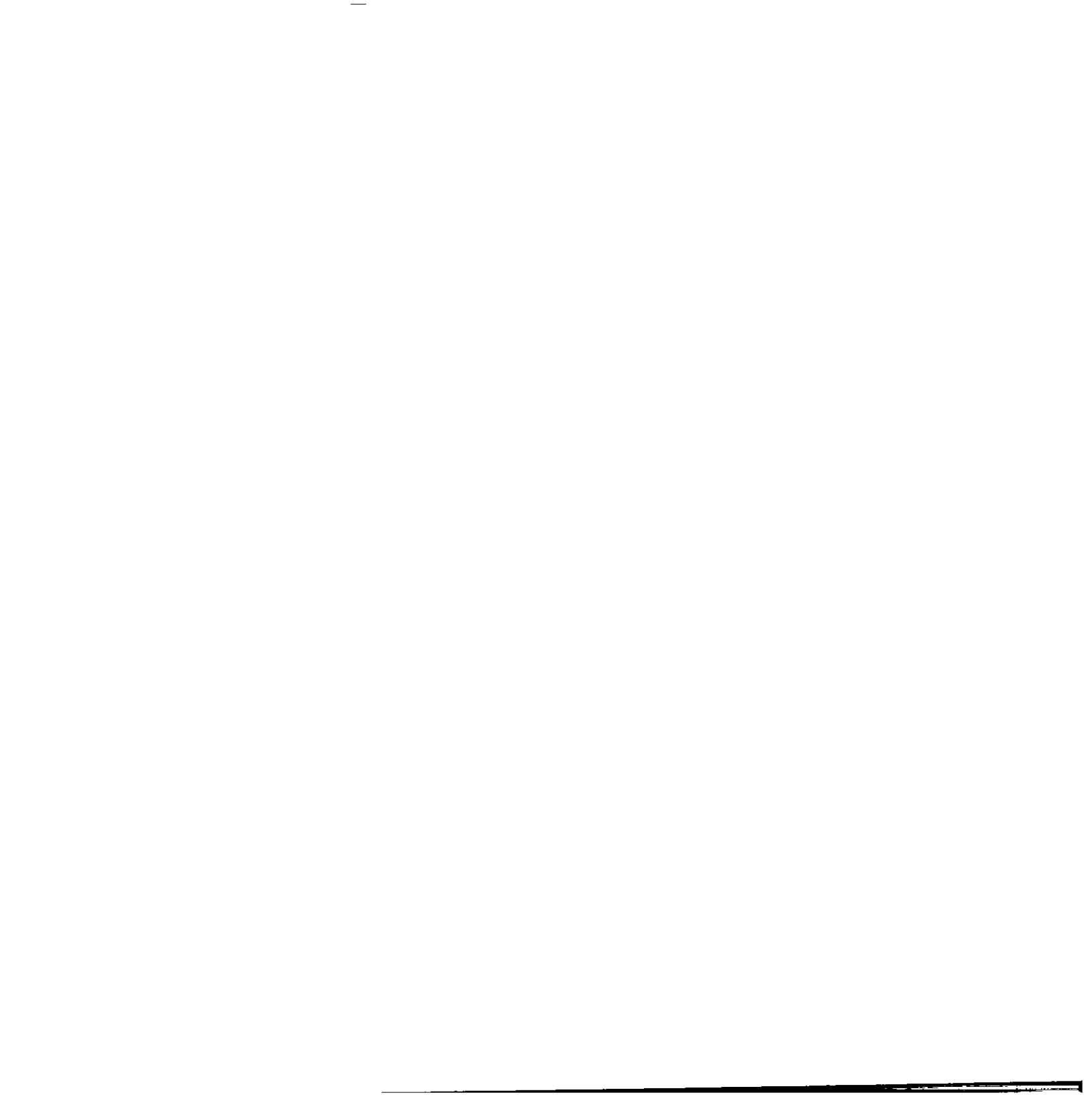
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29 provide administrative and other support to the task force; and be it

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





Identifier: SCR1-LEG-COU-02-02-16
 Title: CIVICS EDUCATION TASK FORCE
 Sponsor: STEVENS
 Requester: HOUSE EDUCATION

Department: Alaska Legislature
 Appropriation: Legislative Council
 Allocation: Council and Subcommittees
 OMB Component Number: 783

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below

(Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2017	Included in	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
	Appropriation Requested	Governor's FY2017 Request	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2017	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Personal Services							
Travel	5.9						
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1004 Gen Fund	5.9						
Total	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues							
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Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2016) cost: 0.0 (separate supplemental appropriation required)
 (discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

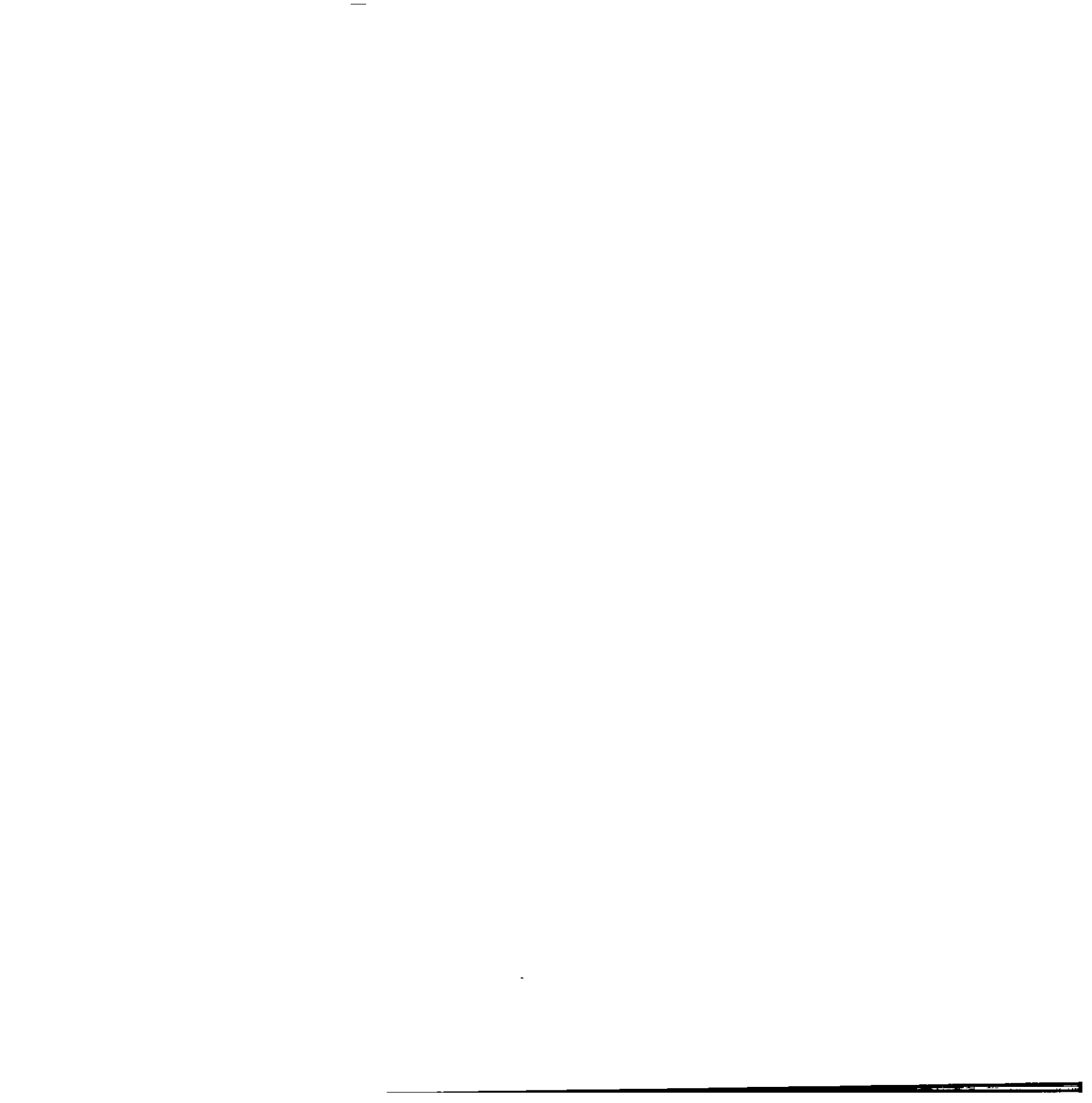
Estimated CAPITAL (FY2017) cost: 0.0 (separate capital appropriation required)
 (discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency?
 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:

Updated for 29th Legislature/2nd Session. Restores funding that was zeroed out in Senate Finance during FY16.



Analysis

SCR 1 creates a 12 member task force on civics education within the legislative branch. The sponsor intends for the task force to have 5 meetings in Anchorage during the interim. Members appointed to the task force could reside in the Anchorage bowl area to help keep travel and lodging costs to a minimum. Any members appointed to the task force that reside outside of the Anchorage area could participate telephonically. Likewise, any guest speakers or other experts testifying before the task force could also do so telephonically. Other agency representatives appointed to the task force would be asked to contribute their own respective funds to accommodate any travel costs associated with participating on the task force. Teleconference and printing costs will be absorbed within existing budgets. The task force will utilize existing legislative staff to fulfill its reporting work. A small, incidental travel budget is incorporated into this fiscal note to cover airfare, travel per diem and mileage.

—

Identifier: SCR1-LEG-COU-04-9-15
 Title: CIVICS EDUCATION TASK FORCE
 Sponsor: STEVENS
 Requester: Senate

Department: Alaska Legislature
 Appropriation: Legislative Council
 Allocation: Council and Subcommittees
 OMB Component Number: 783

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below

(Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2016 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2016 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services								
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits								
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

None								
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

Change In Revenues								
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Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2015) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

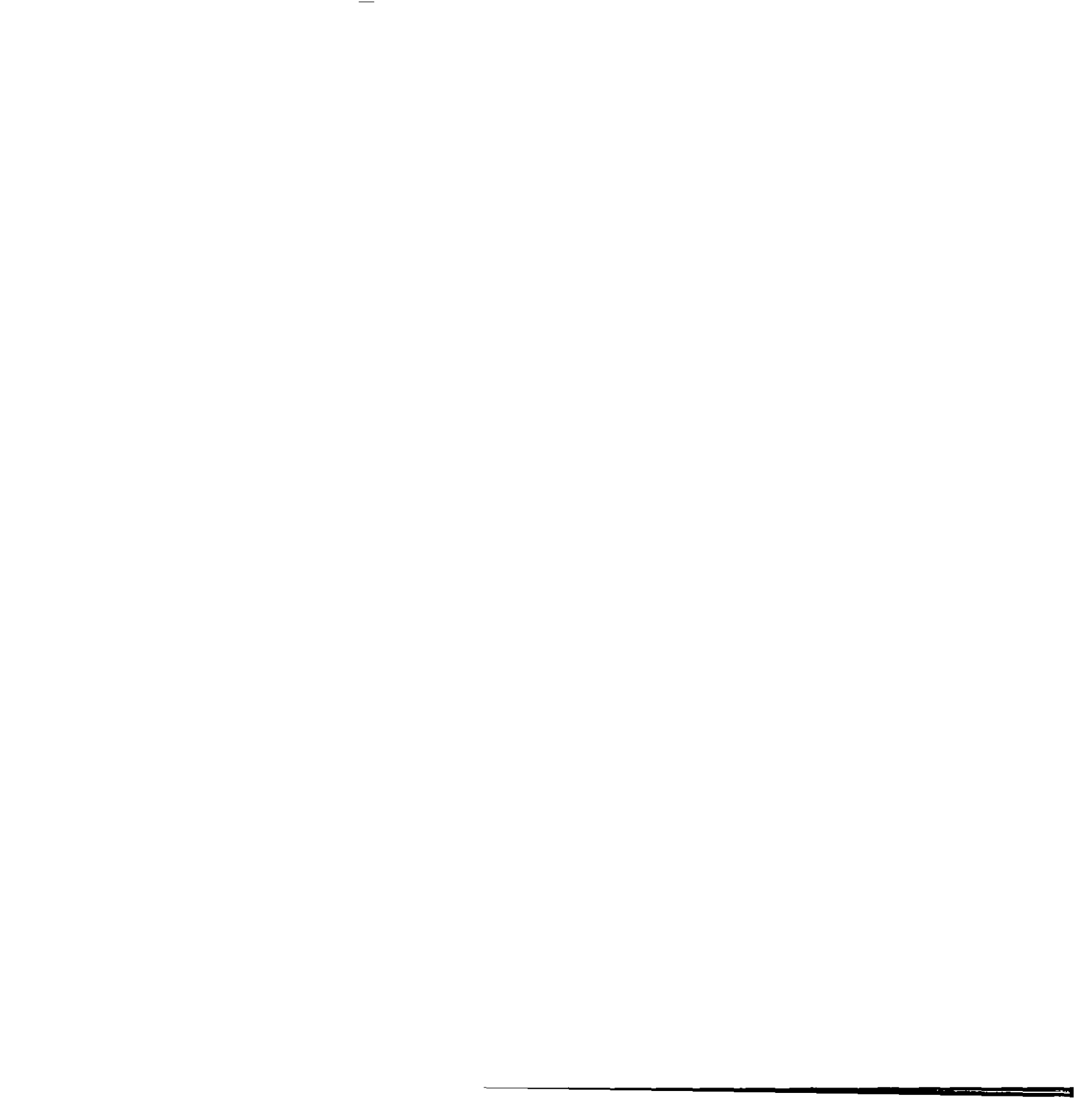
Estimated CAPITAL (FY2016) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency?
 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

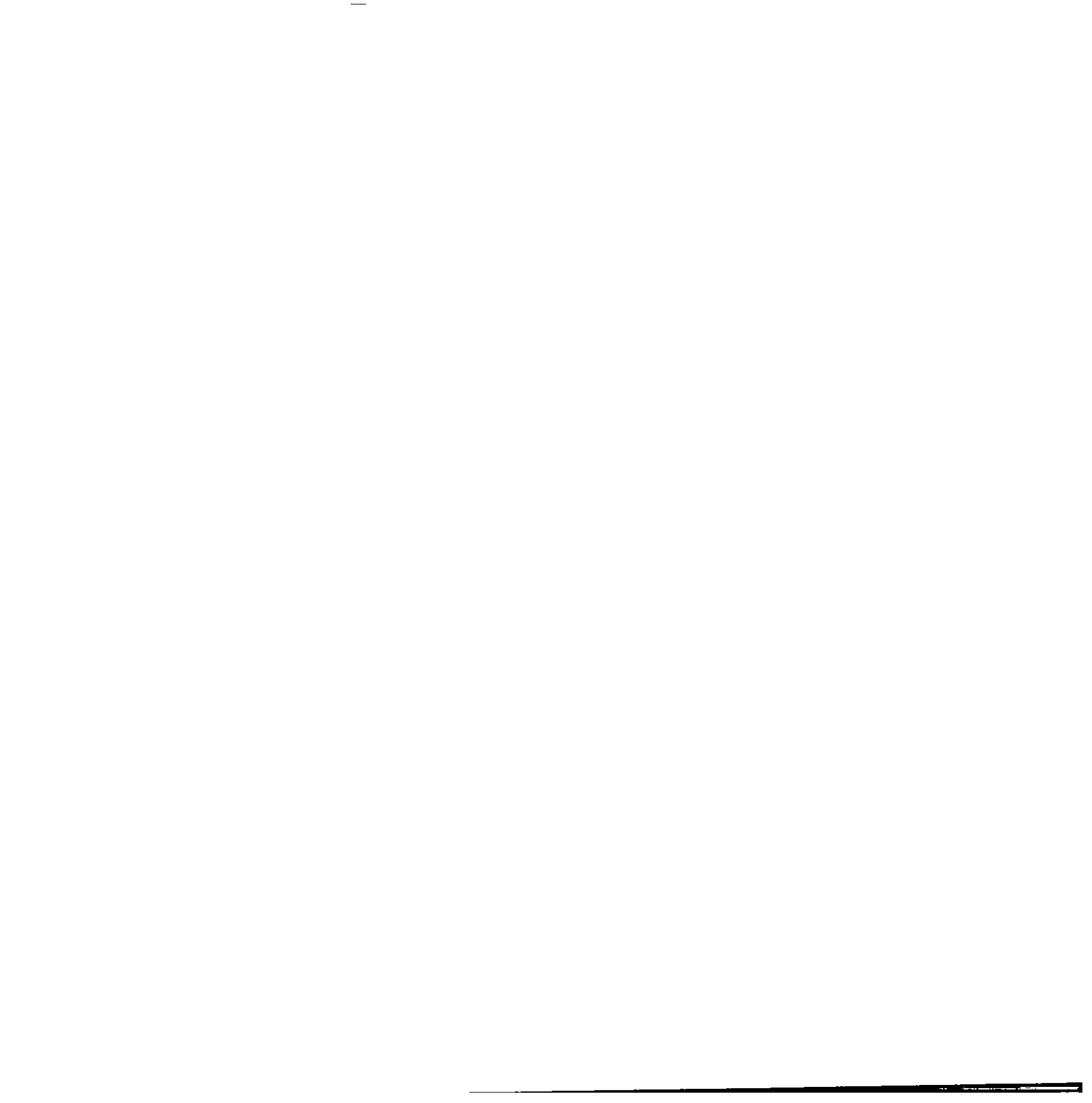
Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:

This fiscal note is zeroed out with the intention that the \$5.9 in travel costs requested on the previous fiscal note will be absorbed.



Analysis

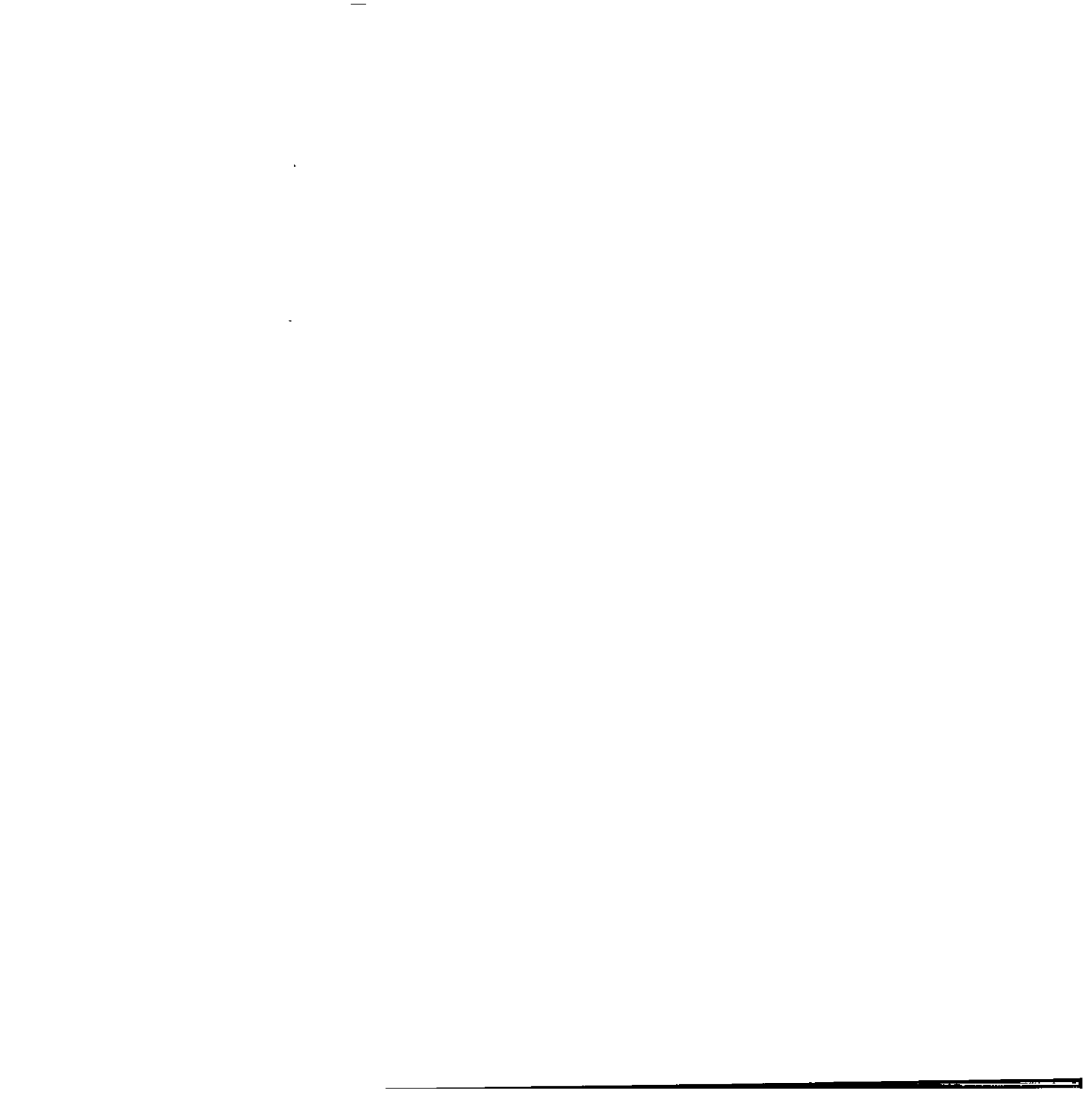
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A CRISIS IN CIVIC EDUCATION

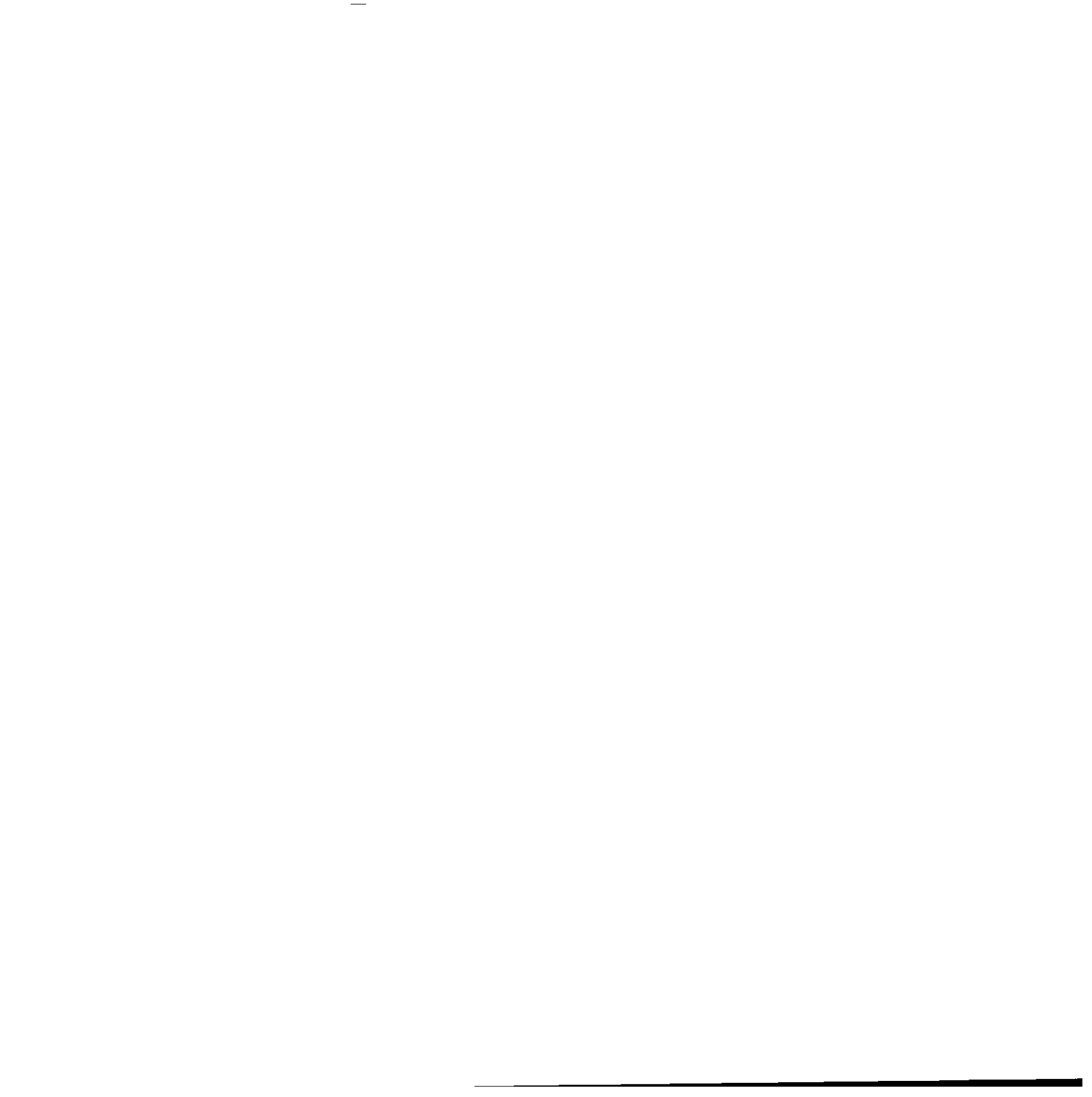
a report by the
American Council of Trustees and Alumni





This report was prepared by the staff of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, with primary contributions from William Gonch, under the direction of Dr. Michael Poliakoff, Vice President of Policy.

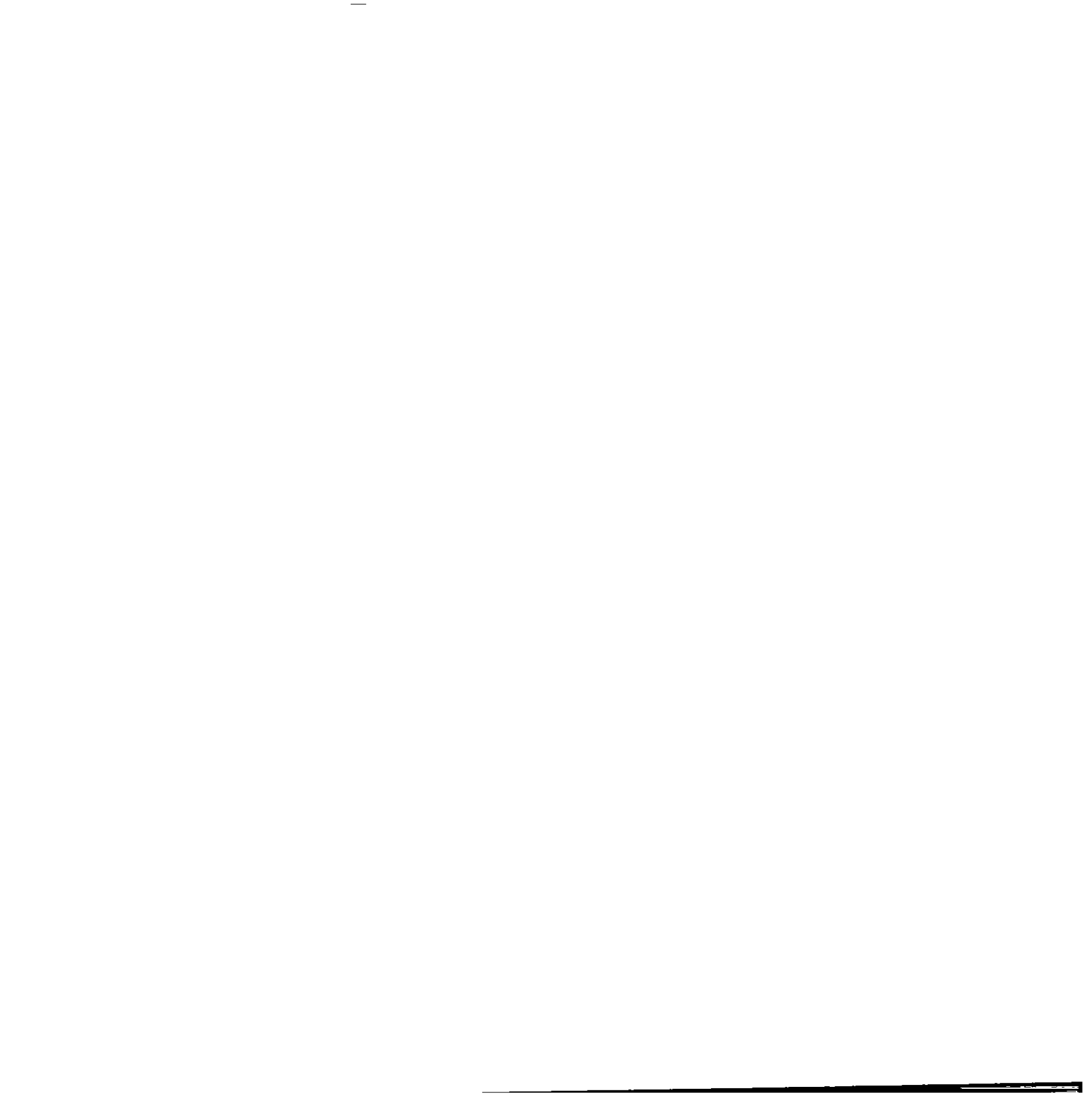
The American Council of Trustees and Alumni is an independent, nonprofit organization committed to academic freedom, excellence, and accountability at America's colleges and universities. Founded in 1995, ACTA is the only national organization dedicated to working with alumni, donors, trustees, and education leaders across the United States to support liberal arts education, uphold high academic standards, safeguard the free exchange of ideas on campus, and ensure that the next generation receives an intellectually rich, high-quality education at an affordable price. Our network consists of alumni and trustees from more than 1,100 colleges and universities, including over 20,000 current board members. Our quarterly newsletter, *Inside Academe*, reaches nearly 13,000 readers.



A CRISIS IN CIVIC EDUCATION

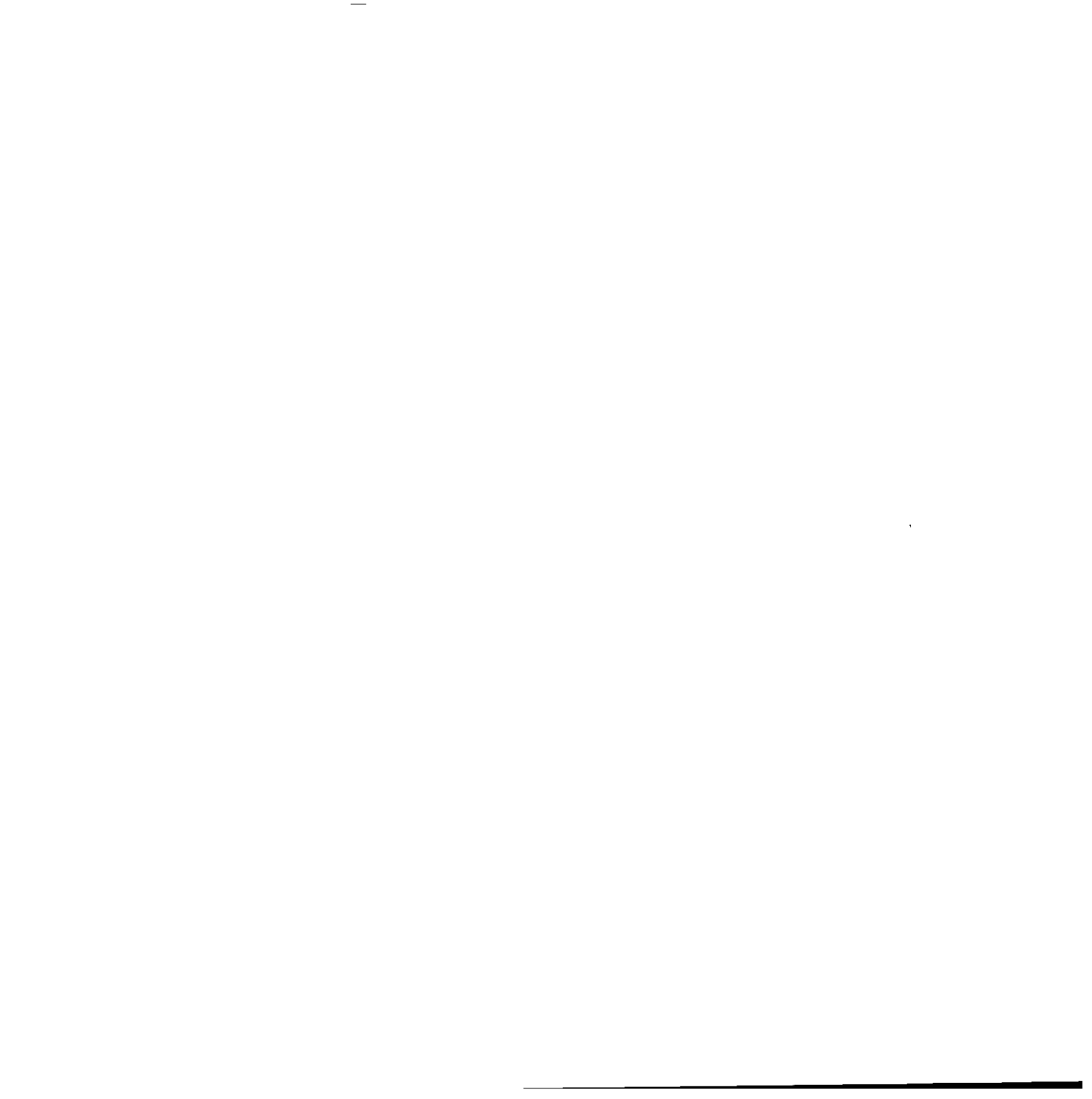
a report by the
American Council of Trustees and Alumni

January 2016



“In today’s world, when so many nations are finding it difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate different ethnic, religious, and racial groups, the case for reminding Americans of their history in our museums and in our schools and colleges and universities . . . could not be stronger—especially as that history conveys our nation’s stunning successful recipe, based on the documents of our founding, for an inclusive and tolerant society.”

— Louise Mirrer, President, New York Historical Society,
on accepting ACTA’s Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding
Contributions to Liberal Arts Education, 2014



A CRISIS IN CIVIC EDUCATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a crisis in American civic education. Survey after survey shows that recent college graduates are alarmingly ignorant of America's history and heritage. They cannot identify the term lengths of members of Congress, the substance of the First Amendment, or the origin of the separation of powers. They do not know the Father of the Constitution, and nearly 10% say that Judith Sheindlin—"Judge Judy"—is on the Supreme Court.

Studies show that our colleges and universities are doing little or nothing to address the knowledge gap. A recent survey by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) of over 1,100 liberal arts colleges and universities found that only a handful—18%—require students to take even one survey course in American history or government before they graduate.

Since 2000, institutions ranging from the Carnegie Corporation to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences have urged colleges and universities to take a much more active role in educating students for informed citizenship. And yet little good has come of their efforts. Instead of demanding content-based coursework, our institutions have, in too many places, supplanted the rigorous study of history and government—the building blocks of civic engagement—with community-service activities. These programs may be wholesome, but they give students little insight into how our system of government works and what roles they must fill as citizens of a democratic republic.

What knowledge students do receive of their history is often one-sided and tendentious. Lately, student protesters have sought to expunge historic figures like Thomas Jefferson or Woodrow Wilson from campus, deeming these men too flawed to deserve monuments or buildings that bear their names. These protesters properly



made on campuses where there is little reason to believe that students are sufficiently grounded in knowledge and understanding of the history of America and its civic institutions to make sound judgments.

In a country that depends upon an educated populace, ignorance of our history and founding documents will be disastrous. An annual survey by the Newseum Institute gives point to the alarm: When asked to identify the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, one-third of Americans could not name a single right; 43% could not even name freedom of speech as one of those rights.¹

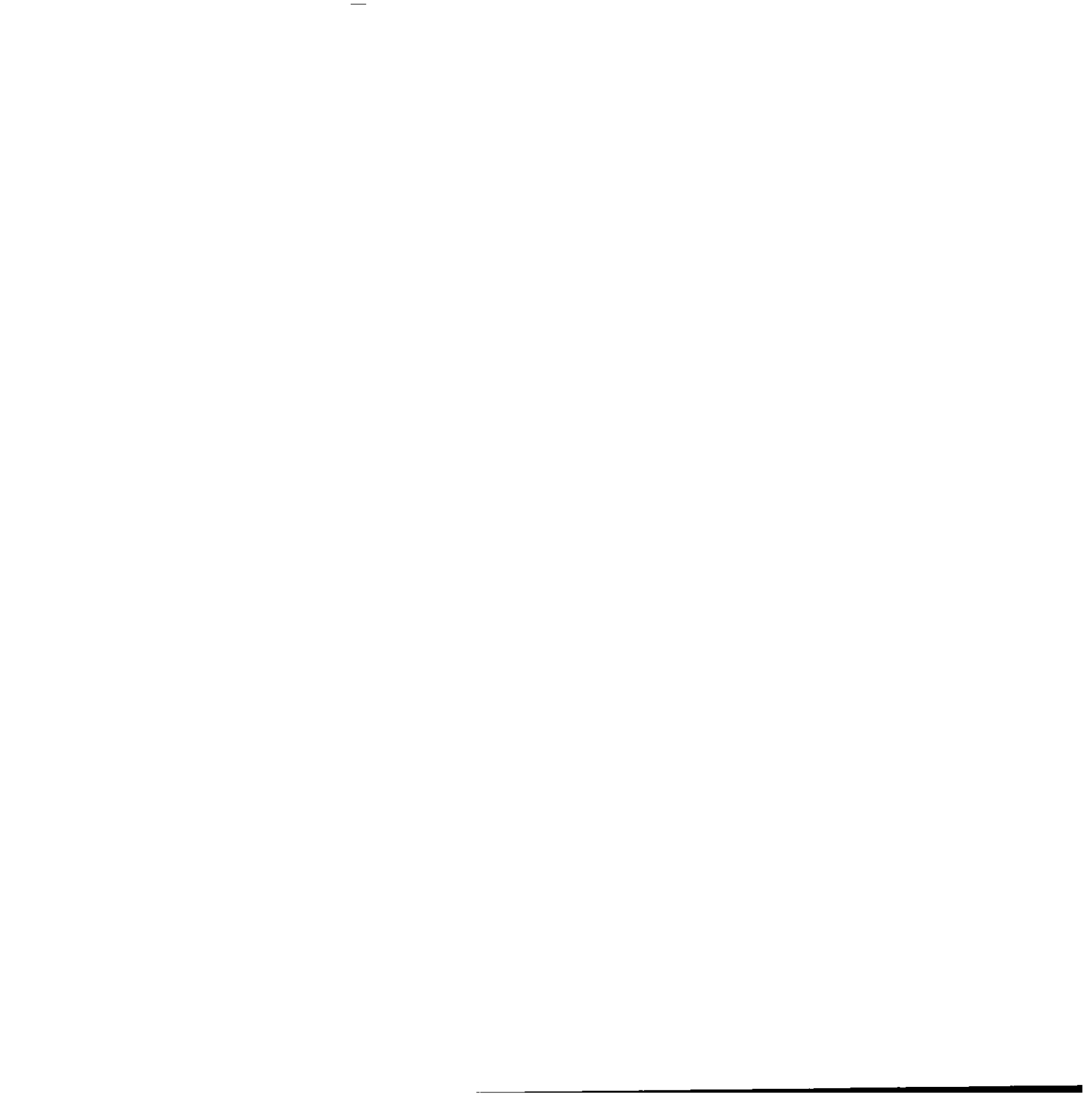
How did we get to such a state? And what is to be done? In the following pages, we outline the problem, and, more importantly, what we must do to restore rich civic education for all students and especially the college graduates who will be our next generation of leaders.

The Problem

Educators and policymakers know we have a problem. For the last 15 years, organizations across the educational spectrum have focused on the need to revive Americans' civic knowledge. As early as 2000, ACTA released the disturbing findings of *Losing America's Memory*. In this study, ACTA tested basic historical knowledge among seniors at the 55 top-ranked colleges and universities in the United States. The majority of students failed to identify the significance of Valley Forge, key words from the Gettysburg Address, or even basic facts about the Voting Rights Act. If students had received grades, more than 80% would have received a D or F.²

ACTA's findings ran in hundreds of newspapers across the country, and nationally syndicated columnists warned about declining historical awareness. Concerned that this profound ignorance was a threat to the future of our democracy, the 106th Congress passed a unanimous concurrent resolution calling on trustees, state officials, and citizens to address America's historical illiteracy.³

A wide range of national studies and recommendations for reform followed—at both the K–12 and college level. In 2002, the Association of American Colleges



of nonprofit organizations, and higher education representatives to survey the available resources for developing civic understanding and skills. In 2004, a report sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation and other agencies, *From Classroom to Citizen*, documented deep public support for civic education in public schools, widespread impatience with existing school programs, and a solid mandate for testing students to determine what they did—and did not—know.⁴

And in 2010, the Department of Education commissioned the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement to investigate ways to increase the level of civic literacy among college students. The resulting report, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*, was released at the White House with extensive publicity. The program proposed to reverse what Charles N. Quigley, executive director of the Center for Civic Education, identified as America's "civics recession."⁵

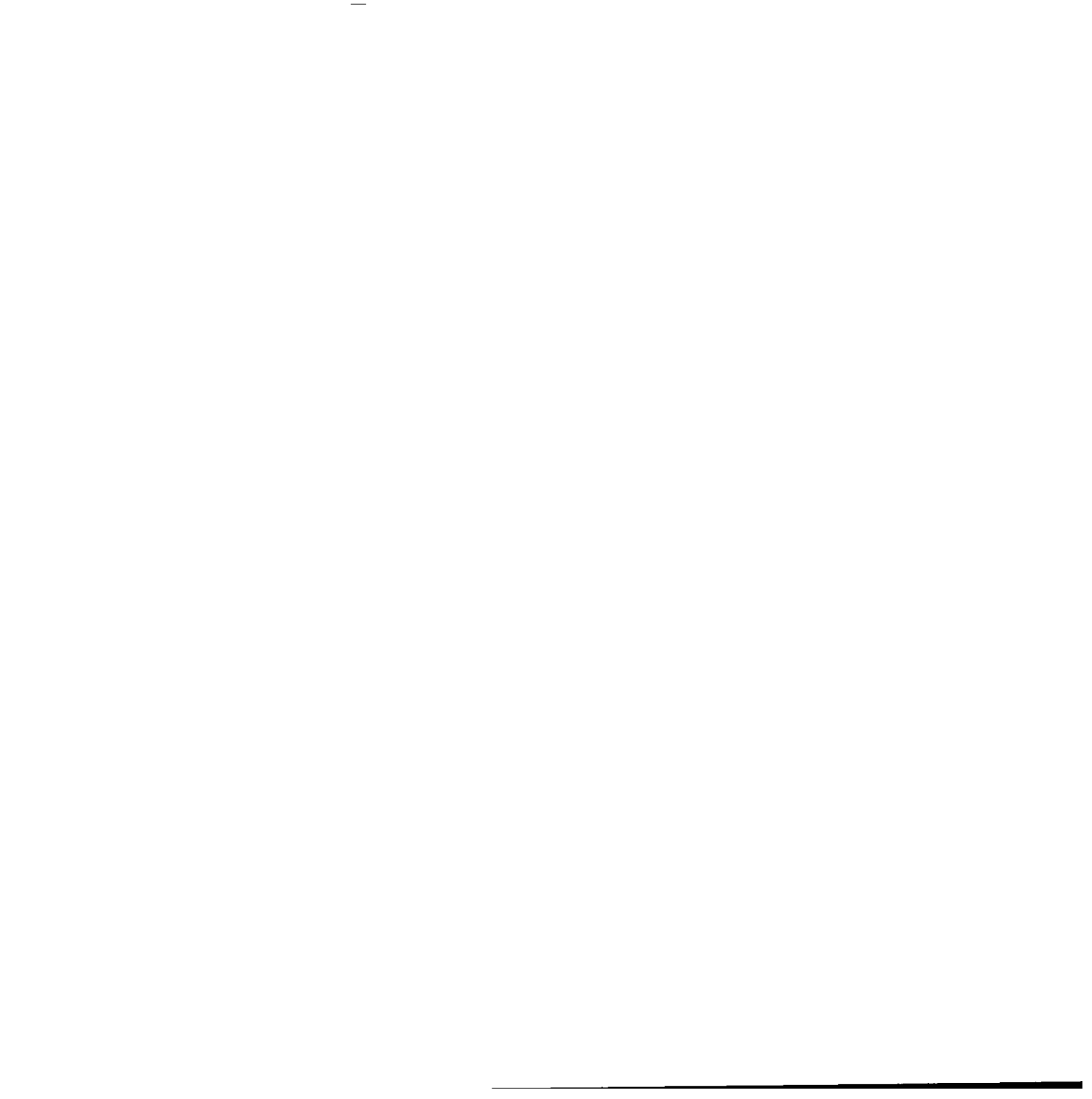
Then in 2012, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators and representatives requested a report from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences to explore how "to achieve long-term national goals for our intellectual and economic well-being; for a stronger, more vibrant civil society; and for the success of cultural diplomacy in the 21st century." The resulting study, *The Heart of the Matter*, called on K–12 schools and other institutions to "promote the basic literacies and civic skills that sustain a robust public forum for the exchange of ideas."⁶

Finally in 2014, the *Degree Qualifications Profile* (DQP) by the Lumina Foundation called for institutions of higher education to meet requirements in "Civic and Global Learning."⁷

In sum, the last 15 years have seen several major attempts to address Americans' civic knowledge.

No Improvement

Despite the chorus of concerns, the 2010 administration of the federally sponsored National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) civics test only confirmed that the decade had seen little improvement in the civic knowledge of K–12 students. While nearly all 12th graders reported studying civics, only 24% scored at the



level, indicating that they were unable to “describe forms of political participation available in a democracy” or “provide simple interpretations of nontext-based information such as maps, charts, tables, graphs, and cartoons.”⁸ Citing insufficient funding, NAEP’s federally appointed governing board cut the 2014 test in civics and the test in American history for high school seniors and administered the exam only to 8th graders. And it is not an encouraging sign that the 8th-grade scores for both tests showed no significant improvement from the 2010 administration.⁹ Appendix A reproduces two sample NAEP questions provided by the Department of Education.

The grim reality is that college graduates *continue* to show a level of ignorance of America’s system of government just as high school students do. Our vast national expenditure on higher education has had little or no measurable effect on giving students the skills and knowledge they need for effective citizenship.

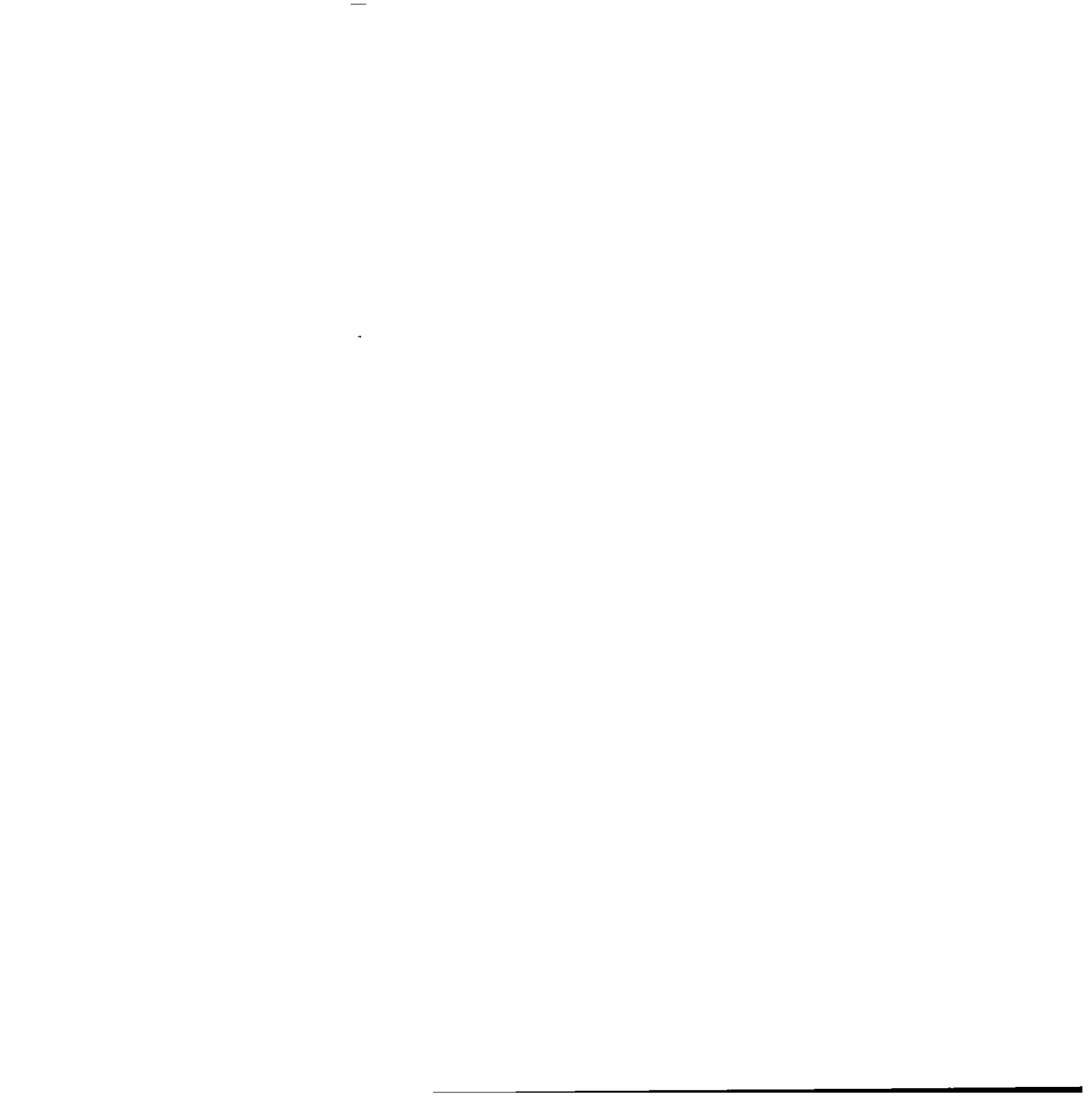
The grim reality is that college graduates *continue* to show a level of ignorance of America’s system of government just as high school students do.

Civic Knowledge of College Graduates Today

In late summer of 2015, ACTA commissioned the research firm GfK to survey recent American college graduates and the public at large about their understanding of our free institutions of government. Our questions were drawn from standard high school civics curricula. They emphasized the content of the U.S. Constitution and the basic workings of our government. A smaller number of questions also asked about prominent figures currently serving in the federal government.

The results were abysmal. For example:

- Only 20.6% of respondents could identify James Madison as the Father of the Constitution. More than 60% thought the answer was Thomas



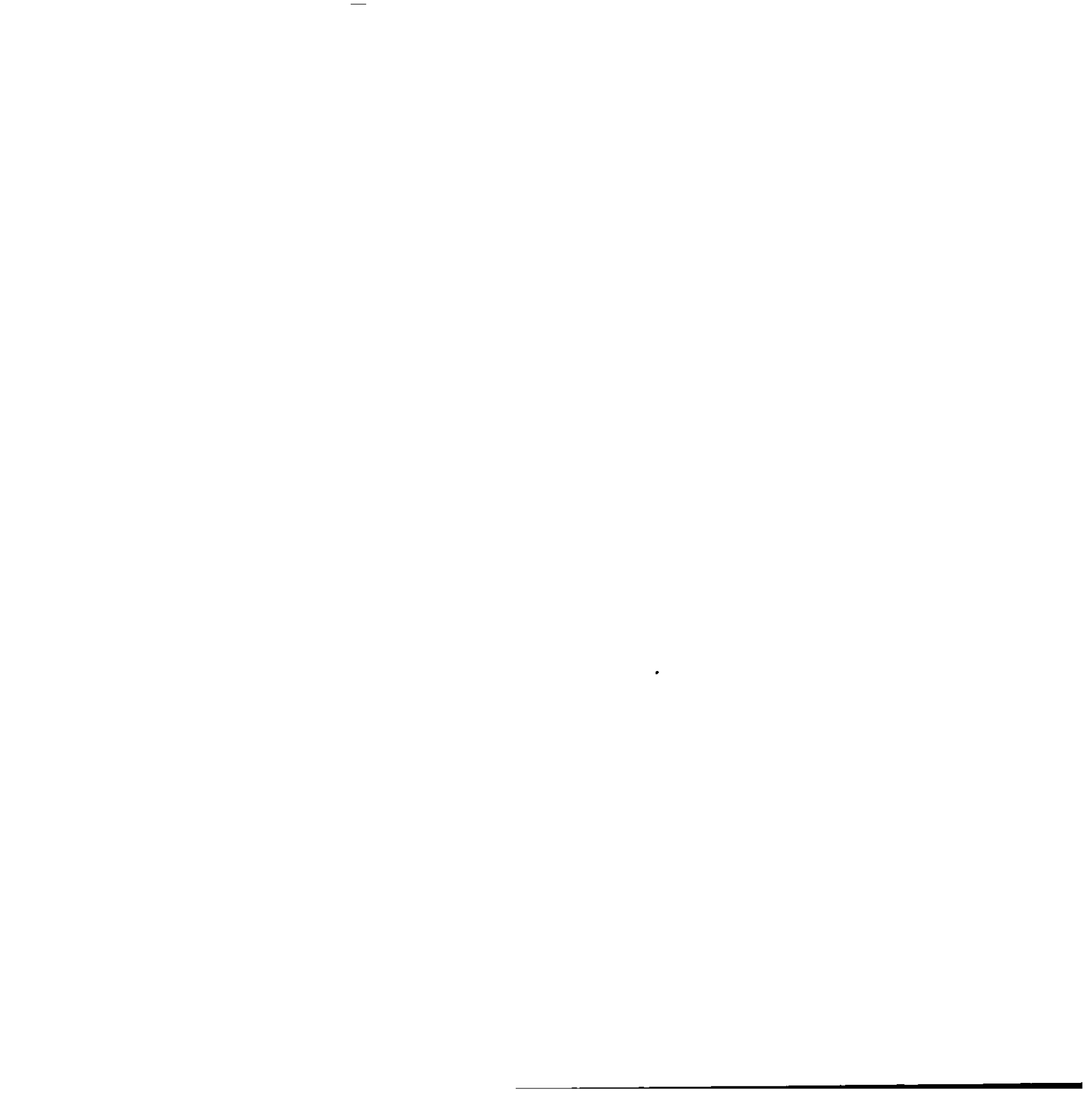
not present during the Constitutional Convention.

- College graduates performed little better: Only 28.4% named Madison, and 59.2% chose Jefferson.
- How do Americans amend the Constitution? More than half of college graduates didn't know. Almost 60% of college graduates failed to identify correctly a requirement for ratifying a constitutional amendment.
- We live in a dangerous world—but almost 40% of college graduates didn't know that Congress has the power to declare war.
- College graduates were even confused about the term lengths of members of Congress. Almost half could not recognize that senators are elected to six-year terms and representatives are elected to two-year terms.
- Less than half of college graduates knew that presidential impeachments are tried before the U.S. Senate.
- And 9.6% of college graduates marked that Judith Sheindlin—"Judge Judy"—was on the Supreme Court!

Many of the figures may actually *understate* how poorly our colleges are doing because older respondents performed significantly better than younger ones. For example, 98.2% of college graduates over the age of 65 knew that the president cannot establish taxes—but only 73.8% of college graduates aged 25–34 answered correctly.

Most college graduates over age 65 knew how to amend the Constitution—76.7% answered correctly. But among college graduates aged 25–34, less than a third chose the right answer, and over half answered that the president must ratify an amendment, failing to comprehend how the division of powers among coequal branches protects citizens' rights.¹⁰ For detailed survey results, see Appendix B.

These were not isolated findings. A 2012 ACTA survey found that less than 20% of American college graduates could accurately identify the effect of the Emancipation Proclamation, less than half could identify George Washington as the American general at Yorktown, and only 42% knew that the Battle of the Bulge occurred during World War II.¹¹



FDR spearheaded the New Deal, and nearly half did not know that Teddy Roosevelt played a major role in constructing the Panama Canal. A survey published early in 2015 found that over one-third could not place the Civil War within the correct 20-year time frame.¹²

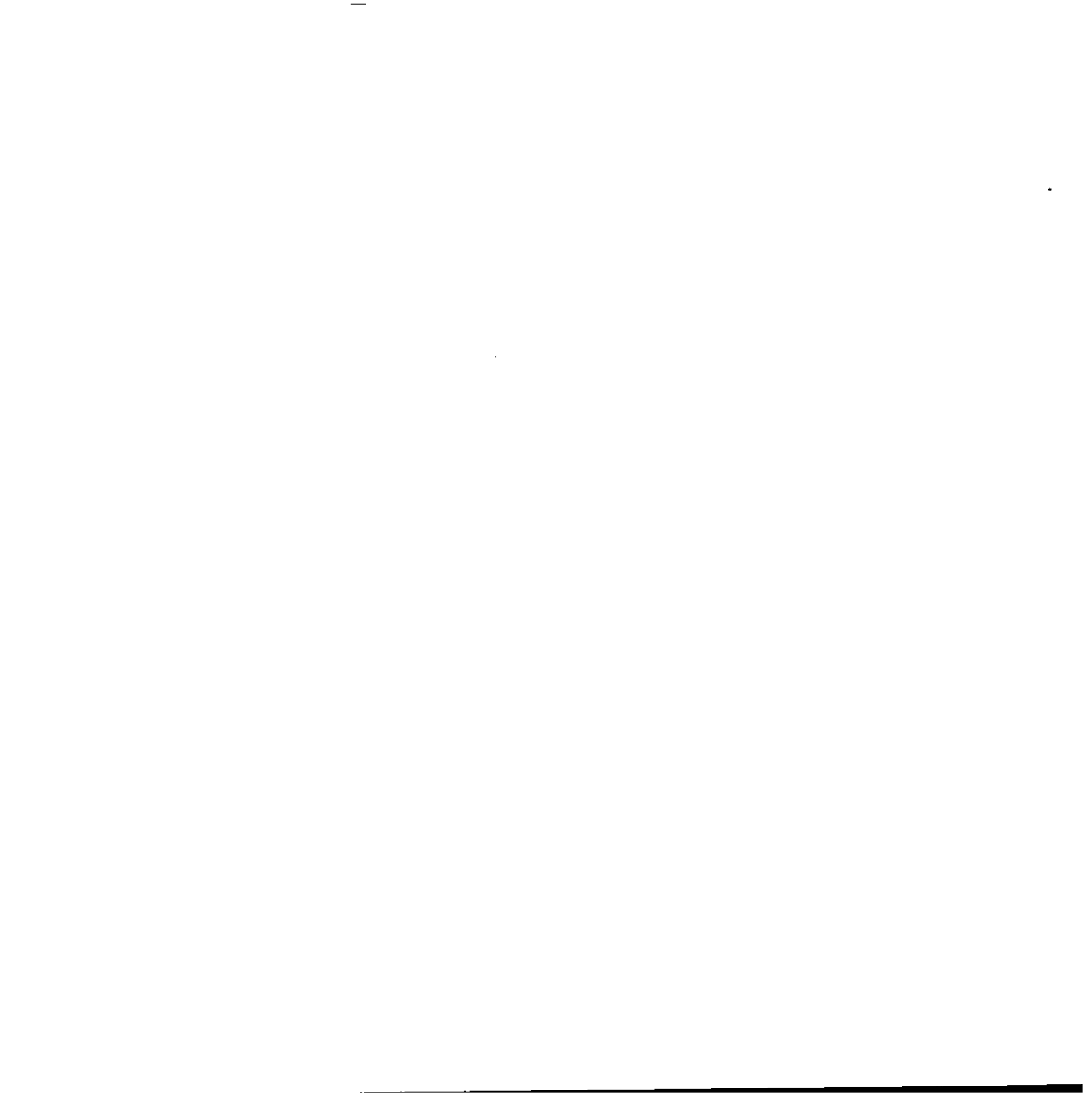
When surveys repeatedly show that college graduates do not understand the fundamental processes of our government and the historical forces that shaped it, the problem is much greater than a simple lack of factual knowledge. It is a dangerous sign of civic disempowerment.

The Proliferation of Non-Solutions

Given all the interest expressed in civic education, how has this happened? The simple answer: a proliferation of programs that do not address the problem. Too many colleges and universities confuse community service and student activism with civic education. Service learning and political engagement form a wholesome part of the development of character and, when judiciously chosen, lead to civic virtue. But without coursework in American history and government, such activities achieve little of substance. Too often, proposals for civic renewal have been overly broad and vague. While they have called for more civic education, they have generally failed to define civic knowledge or require objective assessment. Contemporary discussions of civic education also suffer from what might be called the “universalist fallacy,” which dismisses special concentration on the U.S. Constitution and the founding principles of the nation because such an emphasis makes a “normative” judgment about the priority of certain issues over others in the education of young Americans.¹³

Let’s examine the major reports on civic education, one by one.

A Crucible Moment, the major Department of Education–commissioned report, urges Americans to “expand the number of robust, generative civic partnerships and alliances locally, nationally, and globally to address common problems, empower people to act, strengthen communities and nations, and generate new frontiers of knowledge.”¹⁴ Yet when the report turns to recommendations, it devotes little attention to concrete curricular requirements, objective assessments, or benchmarks of civic and historical understanding. By fixating on “civic partnerships” and



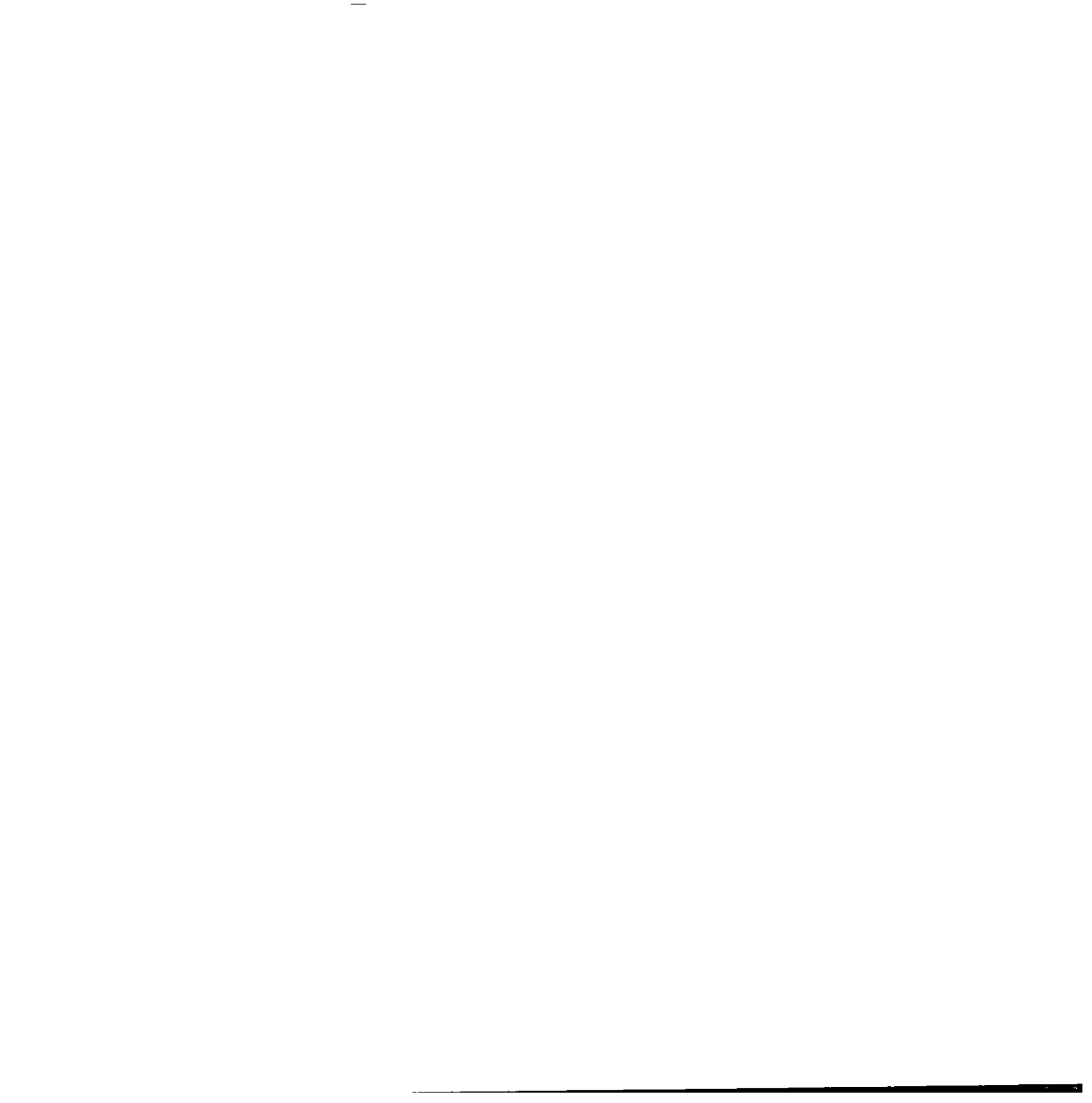
institutions from their unique mission of educating citizens.

A Crucible Moment's other recommendations are little more than gibberish. We can be glad, on first blush, that *A Crucible Moment* calls on schools to "make a comprehensive and contemporary framework for civic learning and democratic engagement an overarching expectation for every student in general education programs, majors, and technical training."¹⁵ But the report offers no insights into what would satisfy these requirements, and it does not provide guidelines for assessing student learning.

The Lumina Foundation's *Degree Qualifications Profile* similarly fails to provide any clue as to the actual substance of effective civic education or to provide objective metrics for ensuring students have mastered the basic principles of American civics. It states, instead, that its "summative" judgments have "nothing to do with specific course requirements" and that "course equivalents are not proxies for proficiency." It "invites evidence about student proficiency in a way that keeps faculty judgment firmly in control," without ever suggesting objective, quantifiable measures of student learning. Indeed, the DQP does not even require that college coursework be used to demonstrate mastery of college-level material: "The proficiencies it articulates can be demonstrated at any time—on entry to college and at any time in a student's academic career at the degree level indicated."¹⁶

Because major guides such as *A Crucible Moment* and the *Degree Qualifications Profile* de-emphasize course content, colleges have little incentive to require civic knowledge of their students. In fact, ACTA's "What Will They Learn?" project, a national study of core curricula, found that only 18% of American colleges and universities require even one foundational course in U.S. history or government.¹⁷

It is not at all unusual to find that even history majors can graduate without a required course in American history. For example, at Bates College (where tuition and fees are \$47,030 per year), history majors must take two courses addressing either Latin American or East Asian history, but they have no requirement to take a course in U.S. history.¹⁸ Although the department advises history majors considering graduate school to include such coursework, it does not take the logical step of making American history part of the major. Amherst, Bowdoin, University of



require American history within their history major.¹⁹

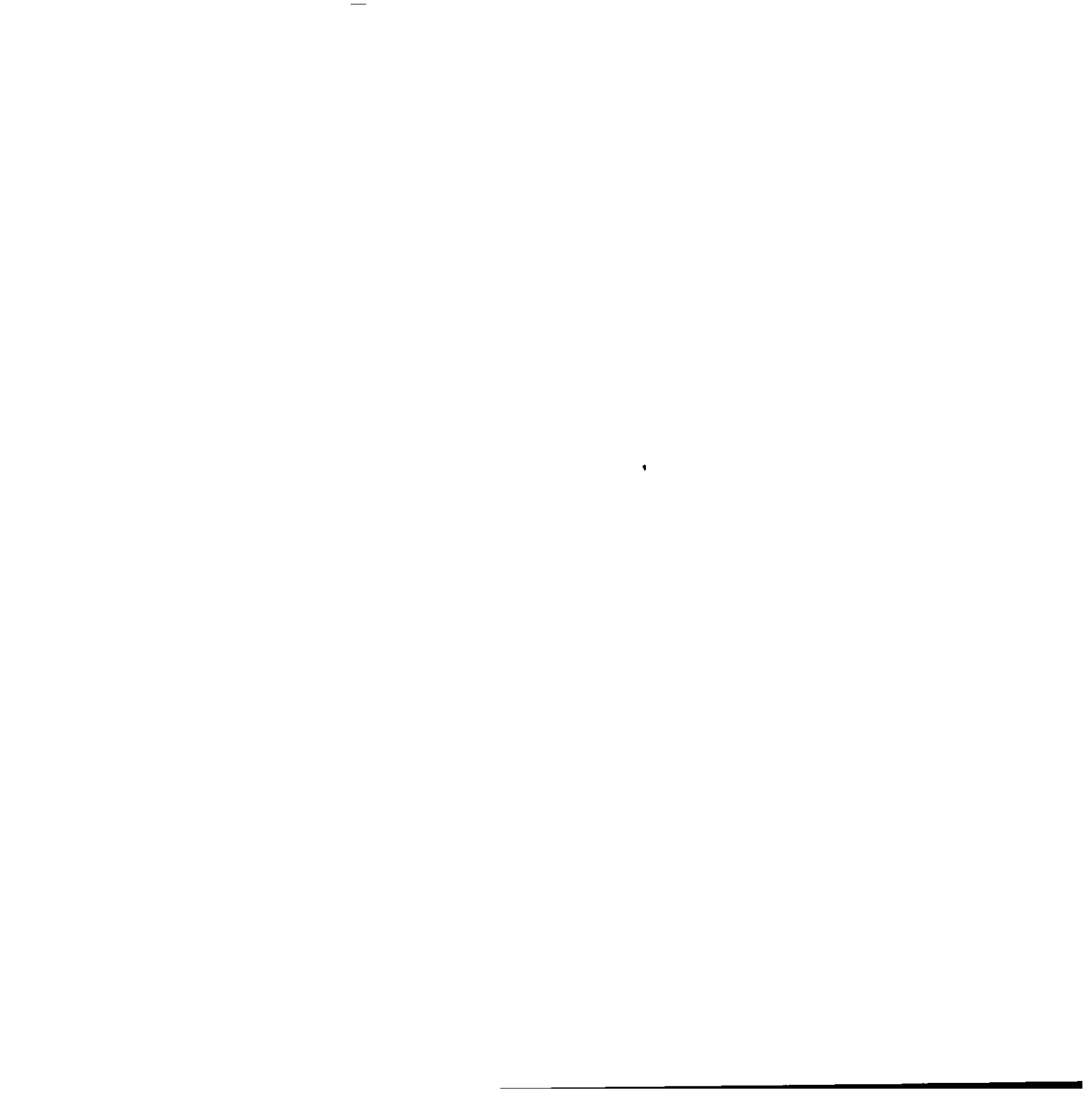
The history of America cannot be known apart from the history of the Constitution, with all of the debates and court cases that form its ongoing history. Moreover, our freedom was won and tested on the battlefield and in our relations with other nations. But the course catalogs and faculty staffing of so many history departments, including the most prestigious, show that too many colleges and universities neglect these key areas within American history—military, diplomatic, and constitutional history. These core topics are dismissed as part of an old-fashioned “hegemonic” view of history, to be replaced by a new focus on race, class, and gender. As Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Gordon Wood sadly observed, “Academic historians are not much interested in constitutional history these days. Historians who write on America’s constitutional past are a vanishing breed.”²⁰

“Academic historians are not much interested in constitutional history these days. Historians who write on America’s constitutional past are a vanishing breed.”

— Gordon Wood, Alva O. Way University Professor and Professor of History Emeritus, Brown University; 2011 recipient of the National Humanities Medal

Is it any wonder that this curricular breakdown has resulted in the limited knowledge of college graduates manifested in our recent surveys?

Bottom line: We need clear requirements for knowledge of American institutions, not vague statements of purpose. Good intentions are not a substitute for a curriculum. In 2012, in response to the AAC&U’s celebration of its role in producing *A Crucible Moment*, ACTA observed that this higher education association “could do immensely more good for civic literacy by encouraging the AAC&U membership, in the clearest of terms, to walk the walk of civic literacy. Make it a required course. Simply require it.” But that straightforward act of responsibility has yet to happen.²¹

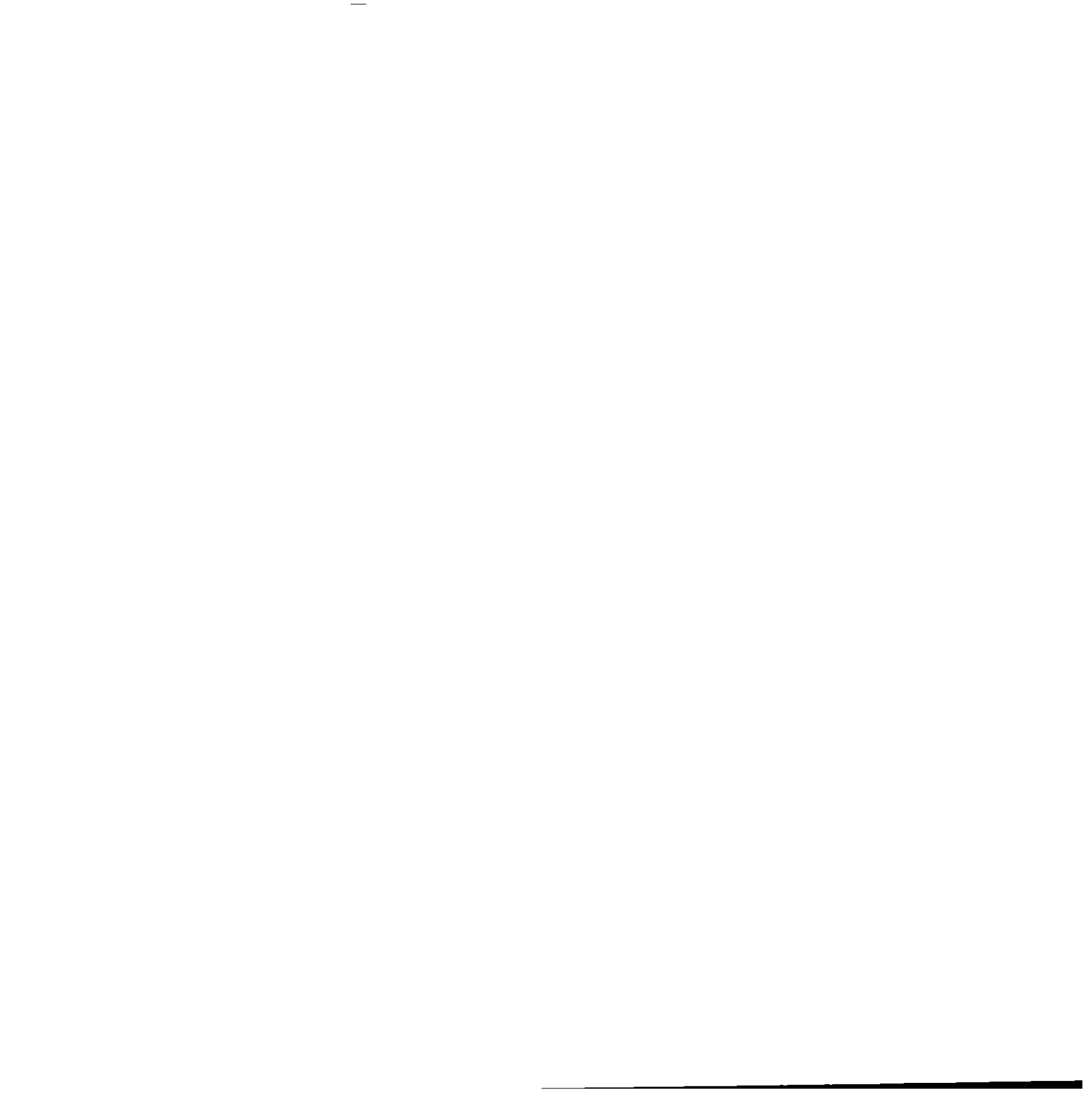


America was founded on an idea that human fulfillment is to be found in liberty and self-government. It is that idea, not some ethnic or genetic inheritance, that unifies us as citizens. The principles of American civic life have given the nation its capacity to be home to so many diverse cultures and identities, but that unique strength in diversity, *e pluribus unum*, is also by nature fragile. Our civic values will fail unless they are constantly renewed through an education that prepares each generation to participate in a democratic republic and to understand the struggles, past and present, that sustain our liberty.

Sometimes, critics see civics as a jingoistic attempt to insist that America is unblemished and to hide our nation's darker moments and failures. Nothing could be further from the truth, as thoughtful civic educators have made clear. Witness what Bruce Cole, former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, said of the *We the People* initiative to revitalize understanding of America: "We will need to tell the story of America's history in its entirety—the peaks and the valleys, the margins and the center. And, of course, the history of the United States cannot be understood in a vacuum. It must include its borders and its neighbors."²² We can address the fault lines and the insufficiencies of our nation. But without informed civic consciousness, we lose our ability to disagree but still be partners in American self-government and find solutions that transcend ideology and faction.

Moreover, we draw insight and inspiration from understanding the difficult path our nation has traveled to hold those freedoms. As Wilfred McClay, the G. T. and Libby Blankenship Chair in the History of Liberty at the University of Oklahoma, has articulated, "one becomes an American less by *descent* than by *consent*." He observes:

The battlefields and patriot graves deserved our reverence not simply for sentimental reasons, or out of reverence for our ancestors' great sacrifices, but because of the cause for which they sacrificed. It would not have been enough had they merely died for the 19th-century equivalent of baseball, hot dogs, apple pie, and Chevrolet. They died, as Lincoln expressed it in the Gettysburg Address, in order that government of the people, by the people, and for the people "shall not perish from the earth."²³



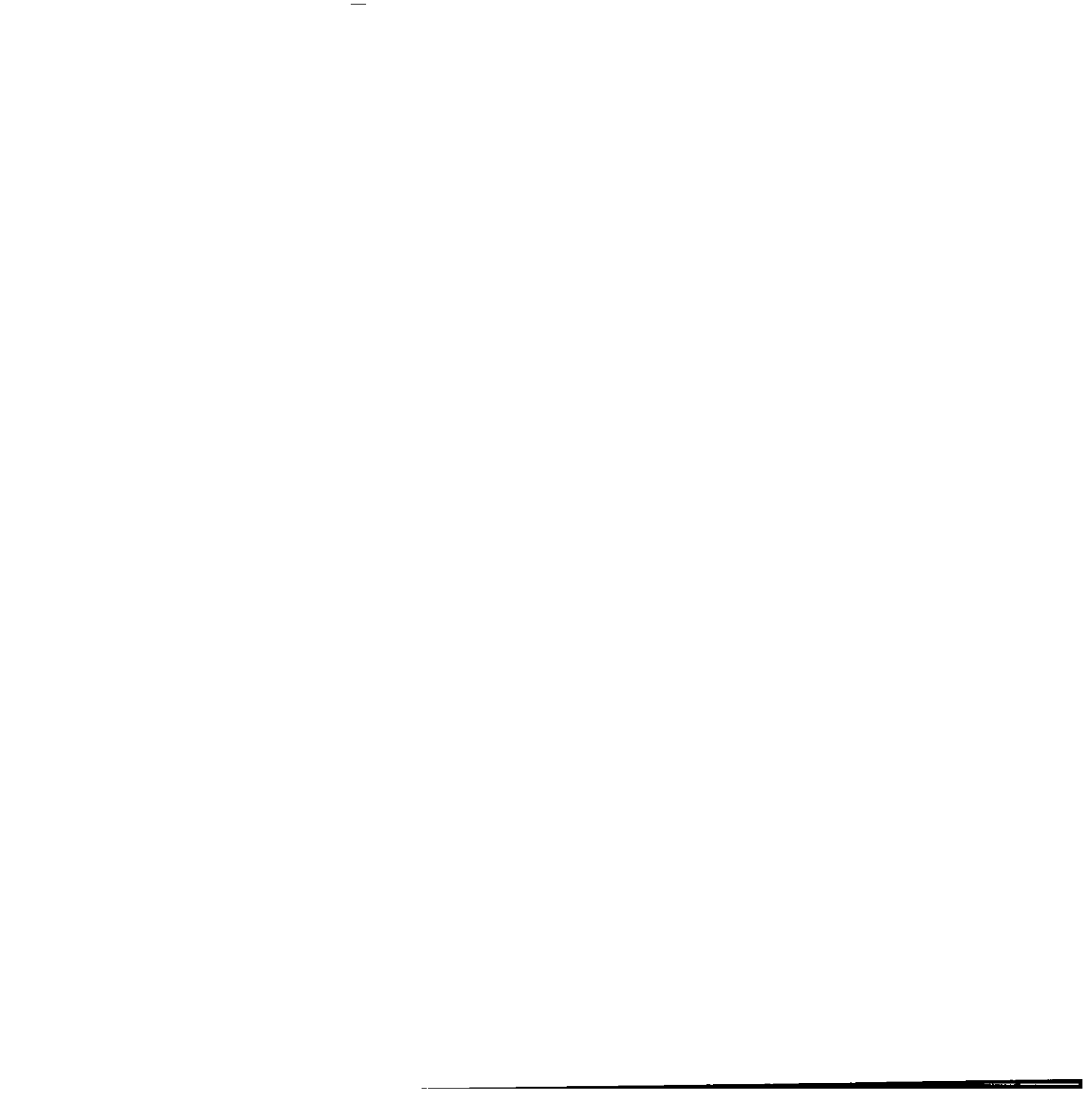
The only effective therapy for ignorance is rigorous study and learning. The following actions should be taken immediately to ensure that students receive a strong civic education.

By Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities should make recovery from America's "civics recession" a top priority. To begin, *every college and university should require at least one course in the history of America, the workings of its free institutions, and the core documents that illuminate our principles of government.*

Colleges should grant exemptions from this requirement sparingly, and only to students who demonstrate a college-level understanding of American government. Nationally normed tests such as the AP U.S. History and U.S. Government exams can provide a reasonable exemption, as can tests developed and administered by the college. One thing they must *not* do is to believe that freshmen come to college with an adequate knowledge of American history and government. The evidence of the NAEP tests and the evidence of the civic illiteracy of college graduates are compelling and conclusive. It is dishonest for a college or university to pretend that its students do not need further coursework in a subject so crucial to the future of this nation.

Colleges and universities should assess their own programs' effectiveness by using objective tests to measure students' knowledge when they enter and when they graduate. Colleges and universities should experiment boldly to determine the best ways to teach students about civic processes and the history of their development—but they must not hesitate to replace poor programs with better ones. Courses with a narrow focus that fail to provide a broad and balanced coverage of American history and government, especially in the absence of robust study of core documents, do students a great disservice. While respecting shared governance and the academic freedom of faculty, college leaders must insist that programs for history majors include requirements for the advanced study of our nation's history and the development of its institutions of government. They should also see to it that history departments achieve disciplinary breadth by hiring faculty with expertise in core fields of U.S. military, diplomatic, and constitutional history.



endeavors, such as service learning or engaged citizenship programs. Such outreach programs should be encouraged—but they must *supplement* requirements for coursework in U.S. government and history. They cannot replace the academic study and understanding of the institutions of American government.

Ideally, American history and government should be part of a comprehensive general education program that includes mathematics, literature, economics, the natural sciences, and other fields that provide a solid foundation for careers and citizenship. Broad-based general education programs allow students to understand the American experience in the context of Western and world history, the history of ideas, the arts and humanities, and the social and natural sciences.

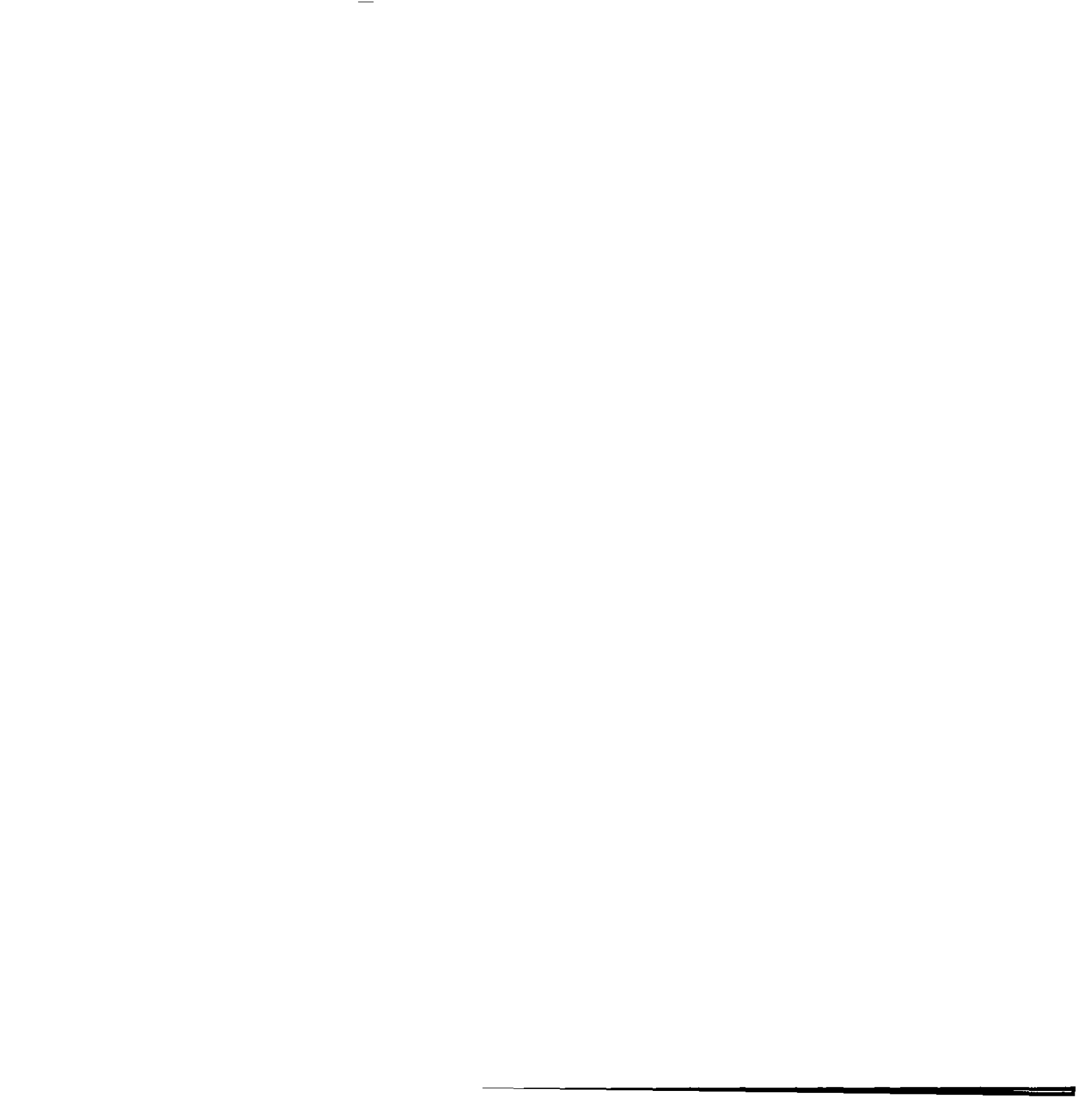
By Federal and State Governments

By not funding the 2014 12th-grade NAEP test of civics, as well as the 12th-grade test of American history, Congress sent disturbing signals to educators. It is a national priority to know where we stand. If the results are poor—as is very likely—then the nation needs to confront and address the deficiency.

Colleges and universities themselves should require all students to take a course in the history and government of the United States. Boards of trustees and administrators should not hesitate to be part of this crucial process to ensure the requirement is robust and effective. When public institutions fail to take this initiative for themselves, however, it falls to state legislators to establish guidelines that ensure the satisfactory civic education of students at taxpayer-funded institutions of higher education.

In establishing requirements for the study of American history and government in public higher education, state lawmakers must always respect academic freedom and avoid micromanaging course content. They must respect the expertise of faculty members. However, legislators should not shy away from explicitly prescribing collegiate study of key texts (such as the U.S. Constitution or the *Federalist Papers*) or major periods in American history.

Several states, including Oklahoma, Nevada, Texas, and Georgia, have such requirements. For example, Georgia requires that all students graduating from



constitutions of the United States and of Georgia.” This requirement can be satisfied with college-level coursework or by completing rigorous exams administered by a student’s university.²⁴ Other states should enact similar requirements if the institutions themselves fail to do so.

States should mandate outcomes assessments in civic education and tie public funds to schools’ fulfillment of these mandates.

By Alumni and Donors

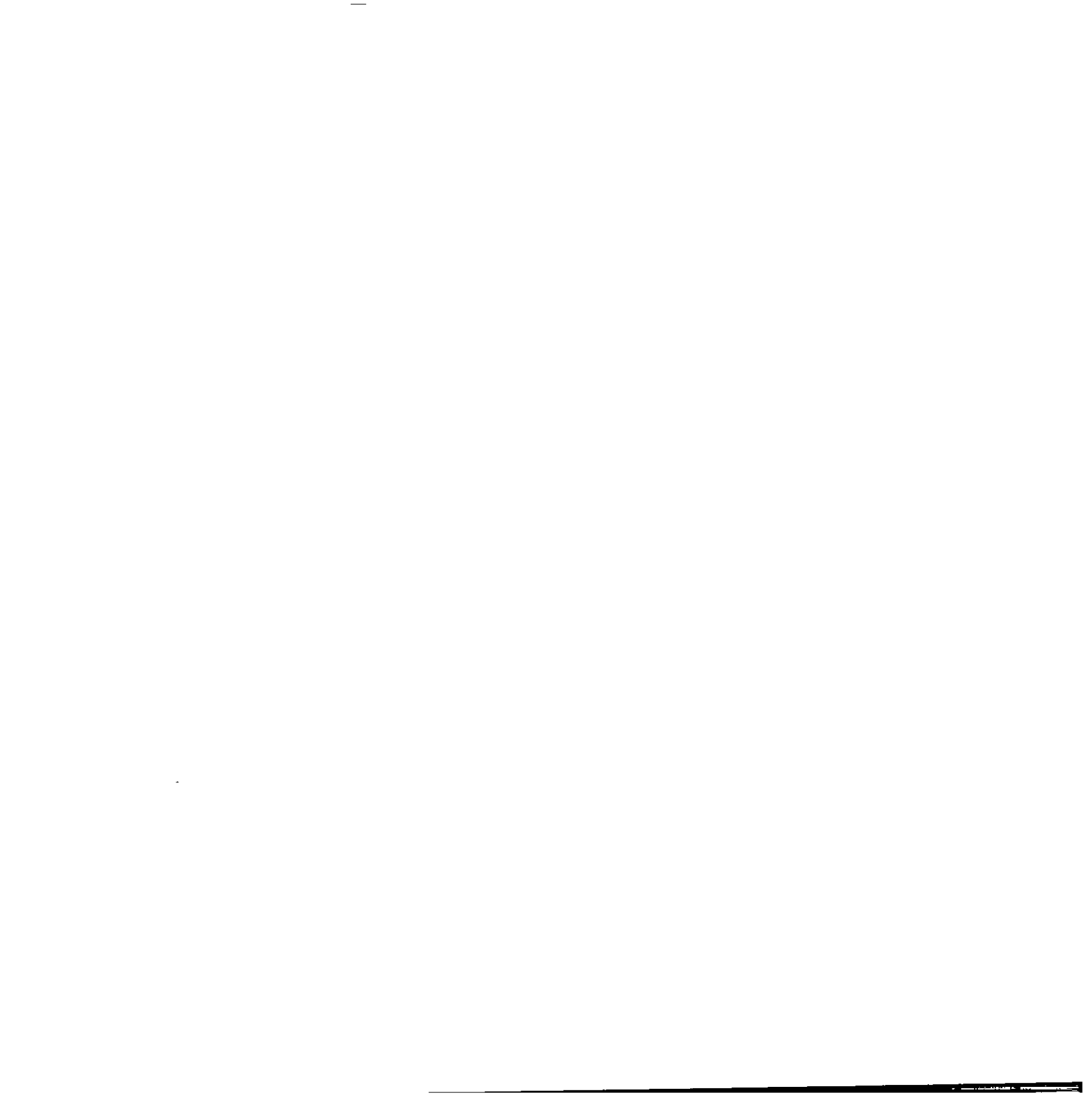
Alumni can exercise a powerful influence on the direction of their alma maters. They should become involved with alumni groups and defend curricular standards in American history and government as well as other fields in order to protect the value of their degrees.

Donors, whether large or small, can help revive high-quality civic education by targeting their gifts to outstanding programs in U.S. government and history. Donors should not contribute to their alma maters’ general funds if their interest is specifically in civic education; instead, they should make direct contributions to programs that advance key educational goals. Donors can consult ACTA’s *Intelligent Donors Guide* to find guidelines for identifying strong programs, and they can also find a list of outstanding programs on our Oases of Excellence web page.²⁵ If a strong program in government and civics is not available, a donor can partner with civic-minded faculty members to create one.

Donors should be careful to guard their gifts by writing clear statements of intent into their contracts. Such statements protect not only donors but also programs and faculty members. Professors involved in civics programs are often dedicated to the vision that they share with donors, but if a donor does not make his intent clear and nonnegotiable, the outcome might be far from the original intention.

By Foundations

Foundations, like individual donors, should target their gifts to programs that will enhance civic education. Late last year, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Gilder



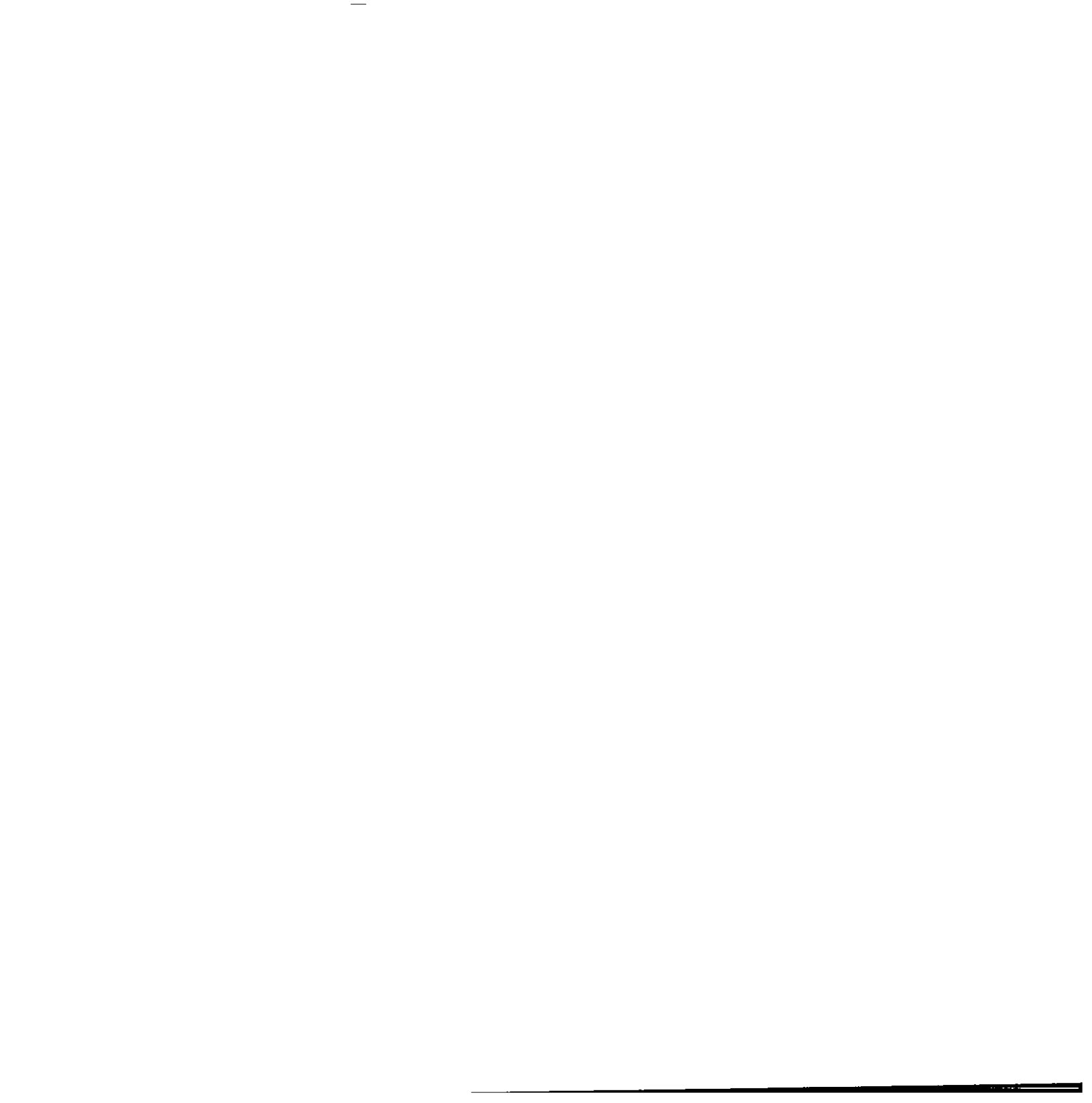
goal in mind—providing students access to the highly acclaimed, and historically sound, musical *Hamilton*, along with classroom materials. Creator Lin-Manuel Miranda called the gift a unique opportunity to inspire and educate students about the continuing relevance of the Founding Fathers. Foundations should establish clear guidelines and principles for the programs they support, with an emphasis on solid historical content. And they should insist on regular, detailed reports with objective assessments of learning outcomes.

By Students and Families

Students should seek out colleges that offer a coherent general education program that is well grounded in the liberal arts, including American history and government. They should avoid colleges that allow a grab-bag approach to general education.

Before choosing a college, prospective students and parents should consult ACTA's WhatWillTheyLearn.com to examine each college's general education program. In addition, they should ask faculty and current students about general education at each school. The best colleges and universities understand different academic disciplines as parts of an interrelated body of skills and knowledge, and they require all students to take a core series of liberal arts courses. At these schools, learning continues outside of the classroom more easily because a student who is pondering an issue in the *Federalist Papers* or in John Locke's works can talk to her friends, her roommates, and fellow members of her extracurricular groups—all of whom will have read the same books and be ready to join in vigorous and informed intellectual exchange on issues of enduring national importance.

Students who attend colleges with weak general education programs can make up for their schools' shortcomings by carefully selecting courses that will expose them to a wide range of important areas, including a thorough grounding in American history and government. Parents should help their children identify essential fields and resist the allure of trendy courses that do not provide students with the foundation that they require to be effective citizens.



America's founders were united in their belief that our government requires engaged, well-informed citizens committed to the practice of self-government. Benjamin Franklin, when asked what form of government the Constitutional Convention had established, famously replied, "a republic, if you can keep it." And Thomas Jefferson observed, "A nation that expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, expects what never was and never will be."

For the last 20 years, our colleges and universities have done a poor job of keeping the republic. They are awarding college diplomas to students, many of whom lack the most elementary understanding of our government. By allowing civic illiteracy, we have disempowered our young citizens. We have weakened our ability to understand the democratic government we have received, to participate in it, to improve what needs reform, and to pass our institutions of free government down to the next generation. We must all view with alarm the polarized political culture we face nationally and on so many college campuses, a culture that breeds ill-informed, ad hominem polemic. It is self-evident that a common collegiate conversation on the principles of American life is our best hope for reinvigorating the open debate and discussion essential for self-government.

The way forward is clear. A renewal of civic education can reverse America's civic deficit and restore widespread awareness of our history and government. It is time for students, parents, colleges and universities, and lawmakers to confront the crisis in civic education.

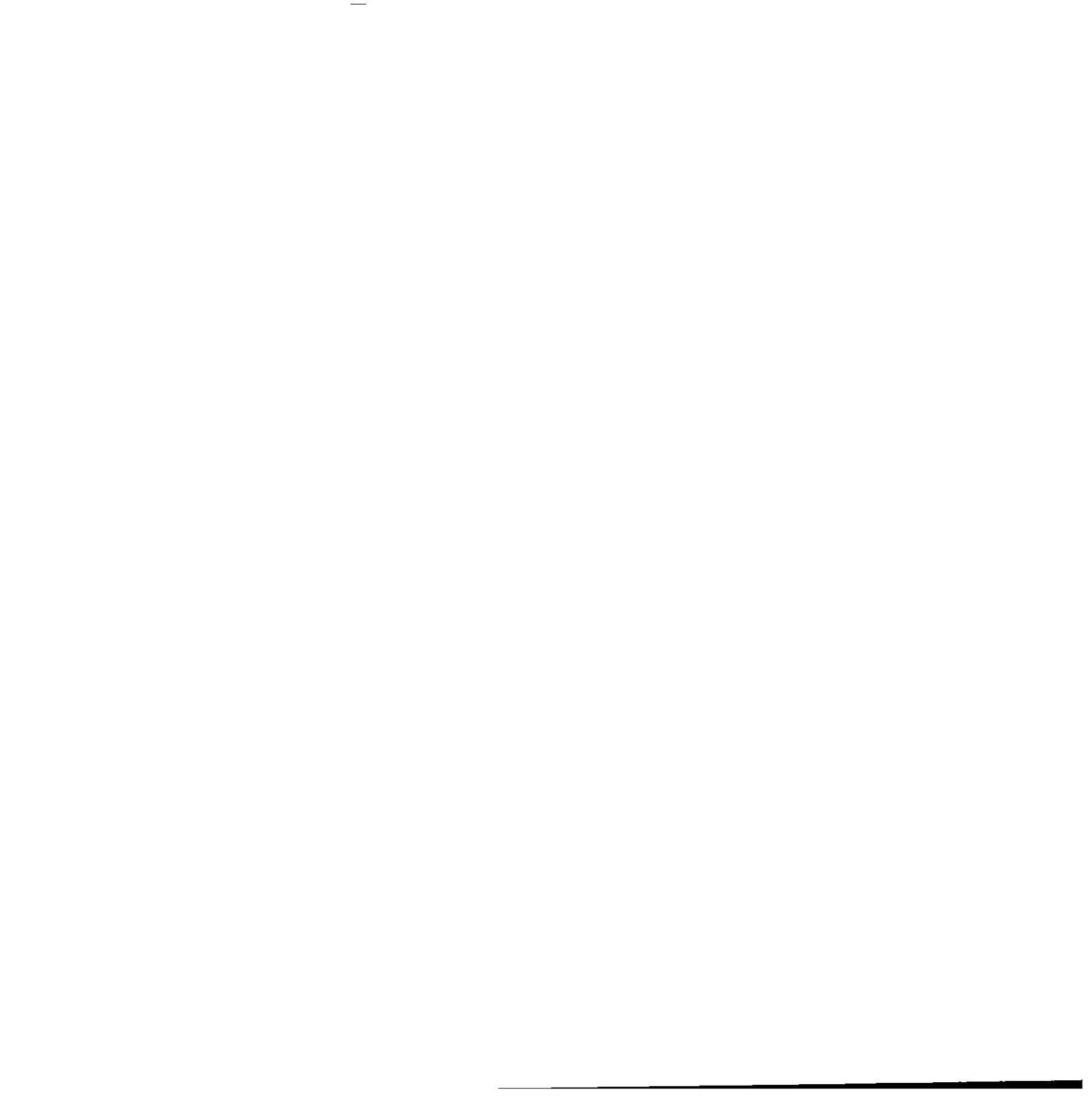


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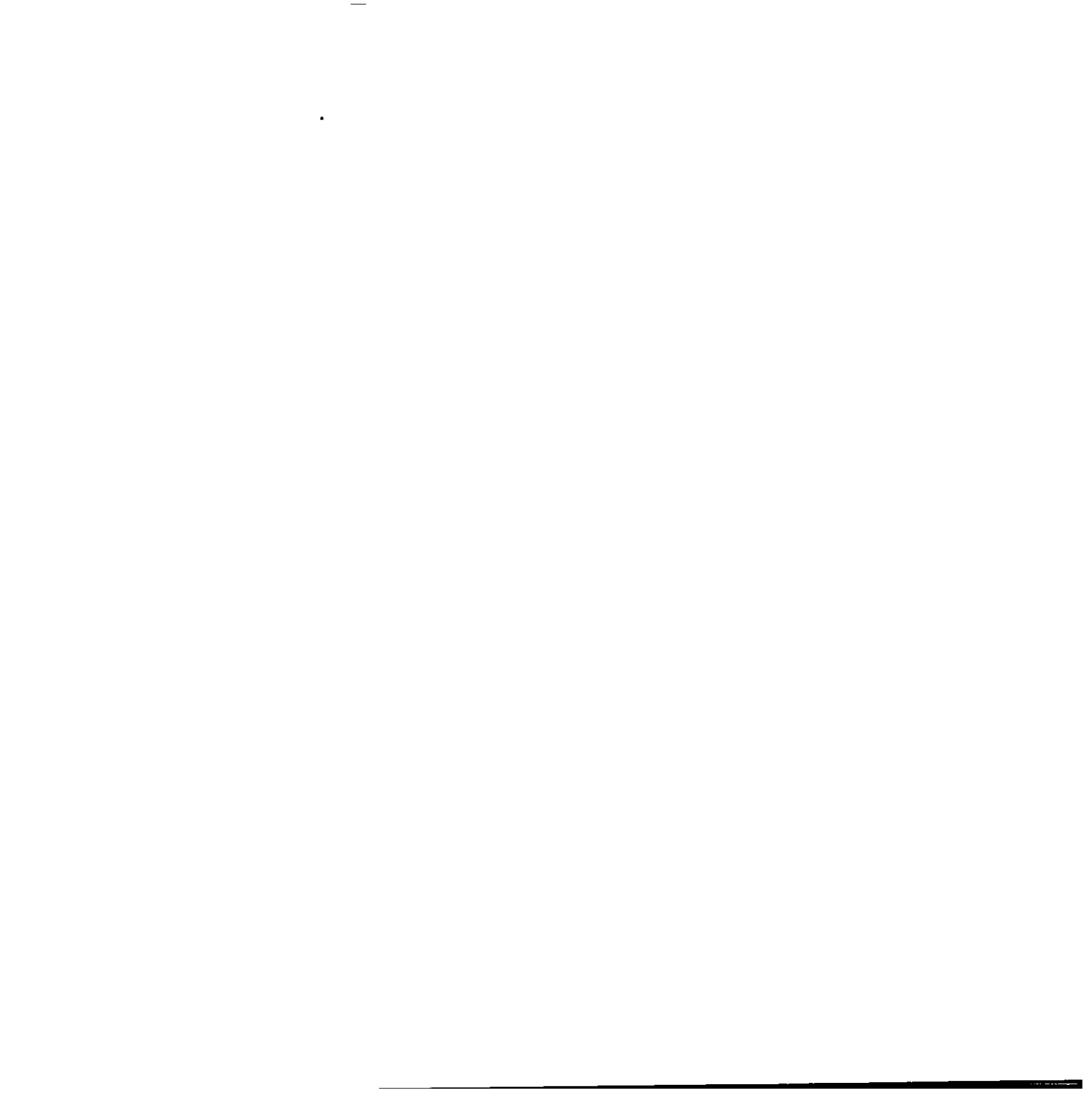


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APPENDIXES



Sample Questions from the NAEP Test of Civic Knowledge

Sample Question 1:

What is one responsibility that modern Presidents have that was not described in the Constitution?

- A. Commanding the armed forces
- B. Granting pardons
- C. Appointing Supreme Court justices
- D. Proposing an annual budget to Congress

Correct answer: D

Sample Question 2:

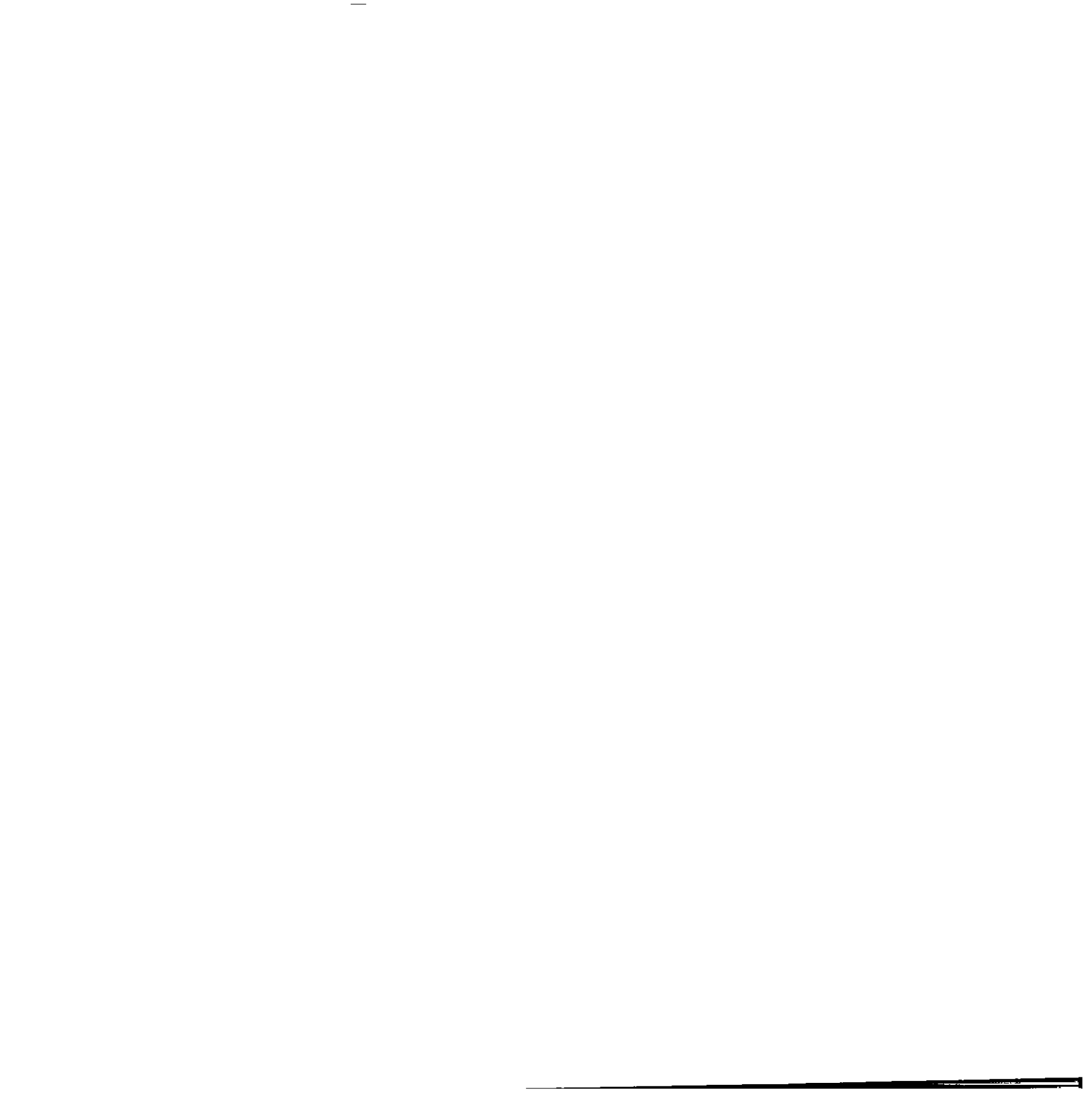
The paragraph below is about the Supreme Court case of *Schenck v. The United States* (1919). In this case, Schenck was prosecuted for having violated the Espionage Act of 1917 by publishing and distributing leaflets that opposed the military draft and U.S. entry into the First World War. The court ruled in favor of the United States. Below is an excerpt from the majority opinion.

We admit that in . . . ordinary times the defendants . . . would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done. The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic. . . . The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the evils that Congress has a right to prevent.

What argument is the Supreme Court making in this decision?

- A. Congress can limit free speech as it sees fit.
- B. The right to free speech is basic to democracy and government may never limit it.
- C. Rights are not absolute and the government may limit them in times of crisis.
- D. The judiciary is powerless to overturn laws like the Espionage Act of 1917.

Correct answer: C



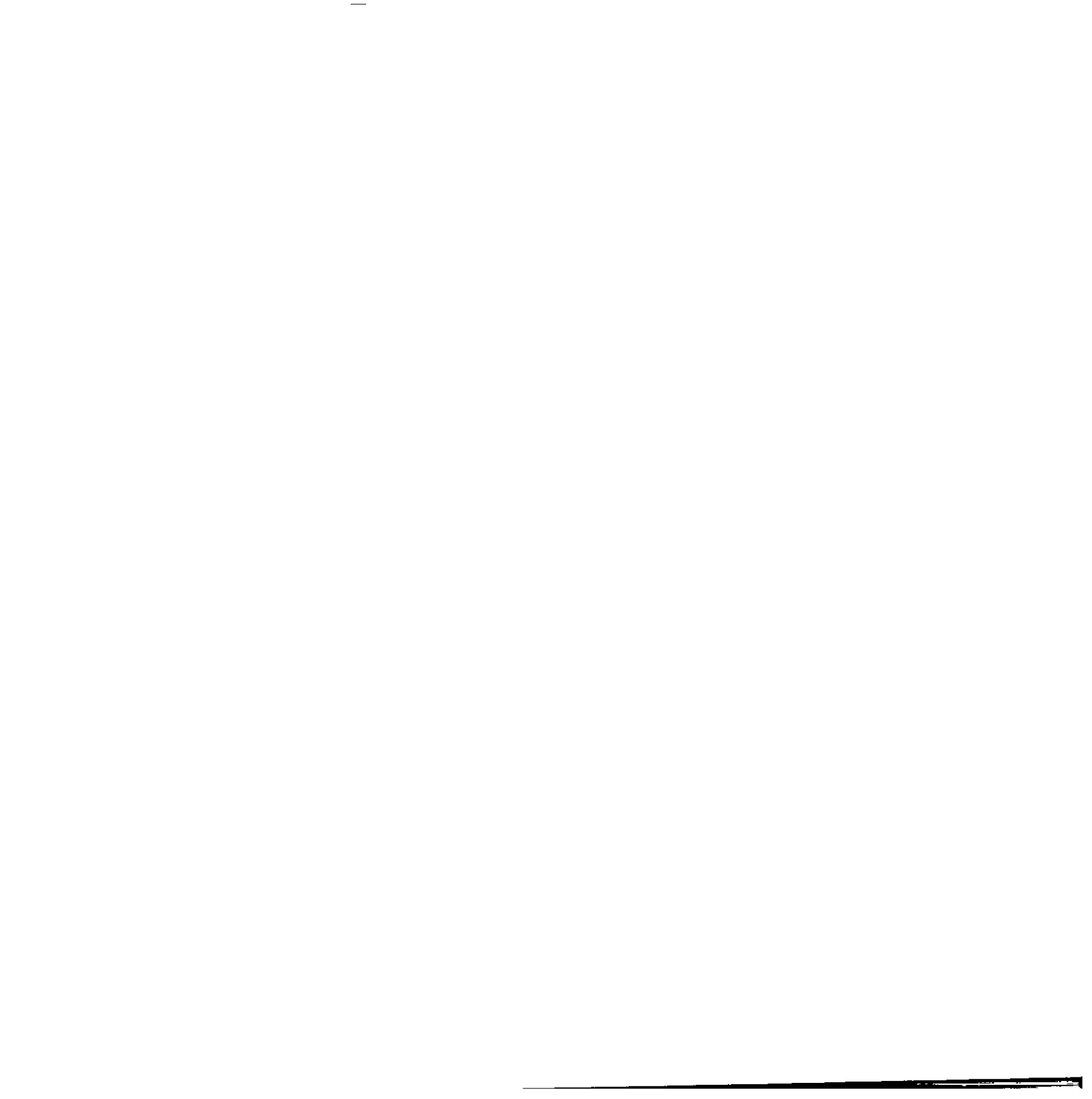
Constitution Day Survey

Methodology

The American Council of Trustees and Alumni commissioned GfK to conduct a survey of the American public and of college graduates. Results are based on 1,000 interviews of adults nationwide, ages 18+. Interviews were conducted between August 28, 2015 and August 30, 2015 through GfK's OmniWeb KnowledgePanel—a representative, probability based online panel that covers 97% of the American public. The sample was weighted by age, sex, education, race, household income, metro/non-metro status, internet status, and geographic region. The margin of error on weighted data is +/- 3 percentage points for the full sample and is higher for subgroups.

Results

	College Graduates	Total
Q1. Which of the following people serves on the U.S. Supreme Court?		
a. Elena Kagan	61.6%	44.0%
b. Lawrence Warren Pierce	21.7%	26.5%
c. John Kerry	5.5%	11.5%
d. Judith Sheindlin	9.6%	13.1%
e. Refused	1.6%	4.9%
Q2. A trial of impeachment of a U.S. President takes place before...		
a. The District of Columbia Court of Appeals	1.3%	2.5%
b. The U.S. Senate	48.7%	38.5%
c. The U.S. Supreme Court	23.8%	34.7%
d. The U.S. House of Representatives	25.0%	21.3%
e. Refused	1.1%	3.1%



a. A signed petition upon which the U.S. Constitution was based	23.2%	37.5%
b. A name given to a group of Constitutional amendments	66.7%	45.9%
c. The law among the states prior to the ratification of the U.S. Constitution	7.0%	11.2%
d. A list of demands sent to the British monarchy by colonial Americans	2.8%	2.5%
e. Refused	0.4%	2.9%

Q4. Which of the following powers is NOT granted to the Executive Branch by the U.S. Constitution?

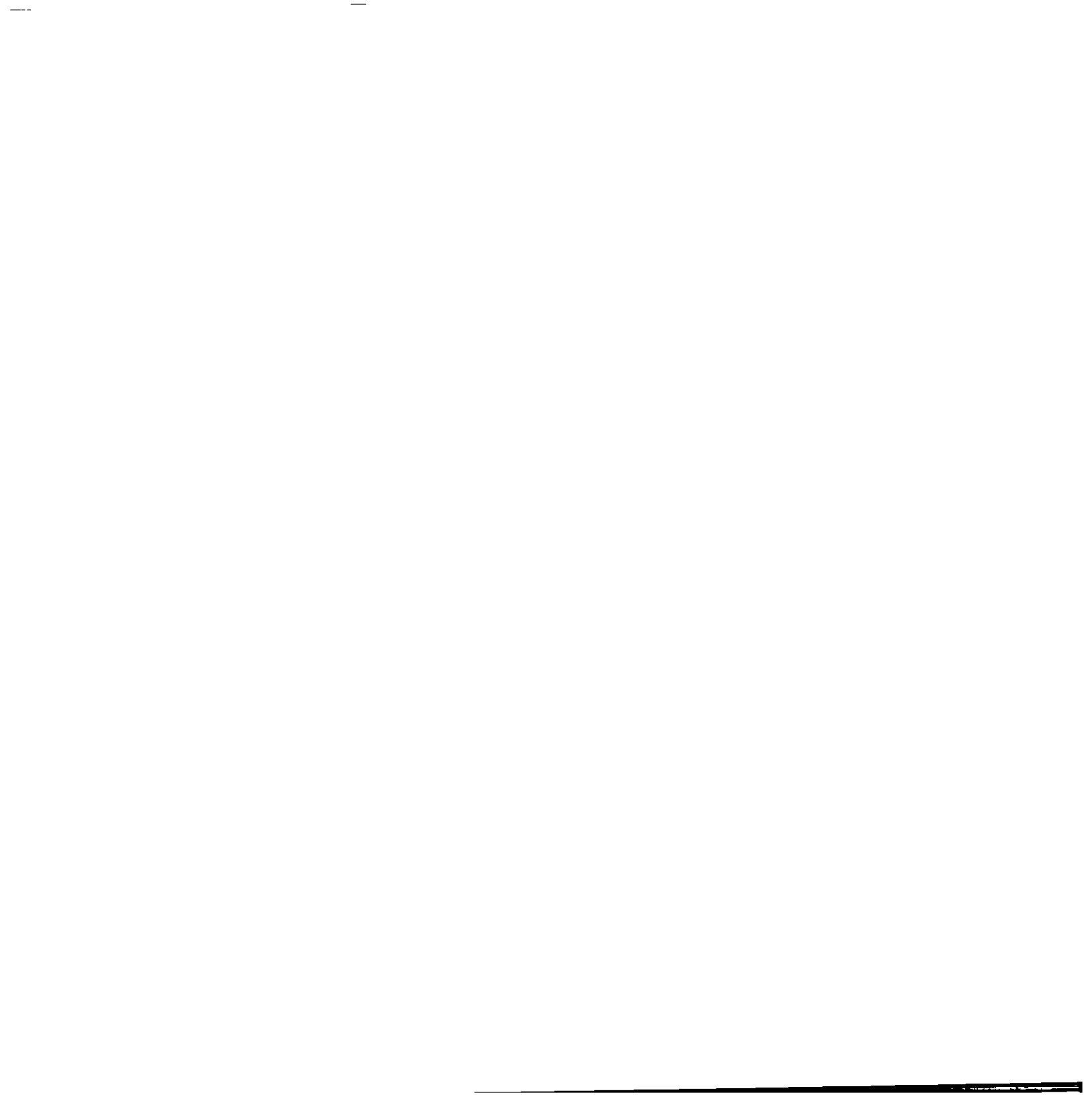
a. Establishing taxes	80.3%	62.1%
b. Nominating Supreme Court justices	5.4%	8.8%
c. Granting pardons	8.2%	14.4%
d. Acting as Commander-in-Chief of the military	5.6%	11.0%
e. Refused	0.4%	3.8%

Q5. Who is the current President of the Senate?

a. Joe Biden	54.4%	38.7%
b. John Roberts	6.1%	8.3%
c. John Boehner	32.1%	36.3%
d. Nancy Pelosi	6.3%	12.0%
e. Refused	1.1%	4.7%

Q6. Who was the "Father of the Constitution"?

a. George Mason	1.6%	1.9%
b. Thomas Jefferson	59.2%	60.5%
c. Benjamin Franklin	10.1%	13.2%
d. James Madison	28.4%	20.6%
e. Refused	0.7%	3.7%



a. 4 years for senators, 4 years for representatives	9.5%	18.9%
b. 6 years for senators, 2 years for representatives	53.5%	37.4%
c. 4 years for senators, 2 years for representatives	27.6%	26.7%
d. 4 years for senators, 6 years for representatives	8.4%	12.9%
e. Refused	1.0%	4.1%

Q8. Which of the following is NOT protected by the First Amendment?

a. Freedom of speech	2.5%	4.0%
b. Right to an education	84.3%	64.4%
c. Right to petition the government	10.3%	22.4%
d. Freedom of assembly	1.6%	6.1%
e. Refused	1.3%	3.0%

Q9. The Constitution must be reauthorized every four years.

a. True	4.2%	7.0%
b. False	86.3%	68.8%
c. Don't know	8.5%	22.7%
d. Refused	1.1%	1.5%

Q10. What is required before a proposed amendment can be approved as part of the Constitution?

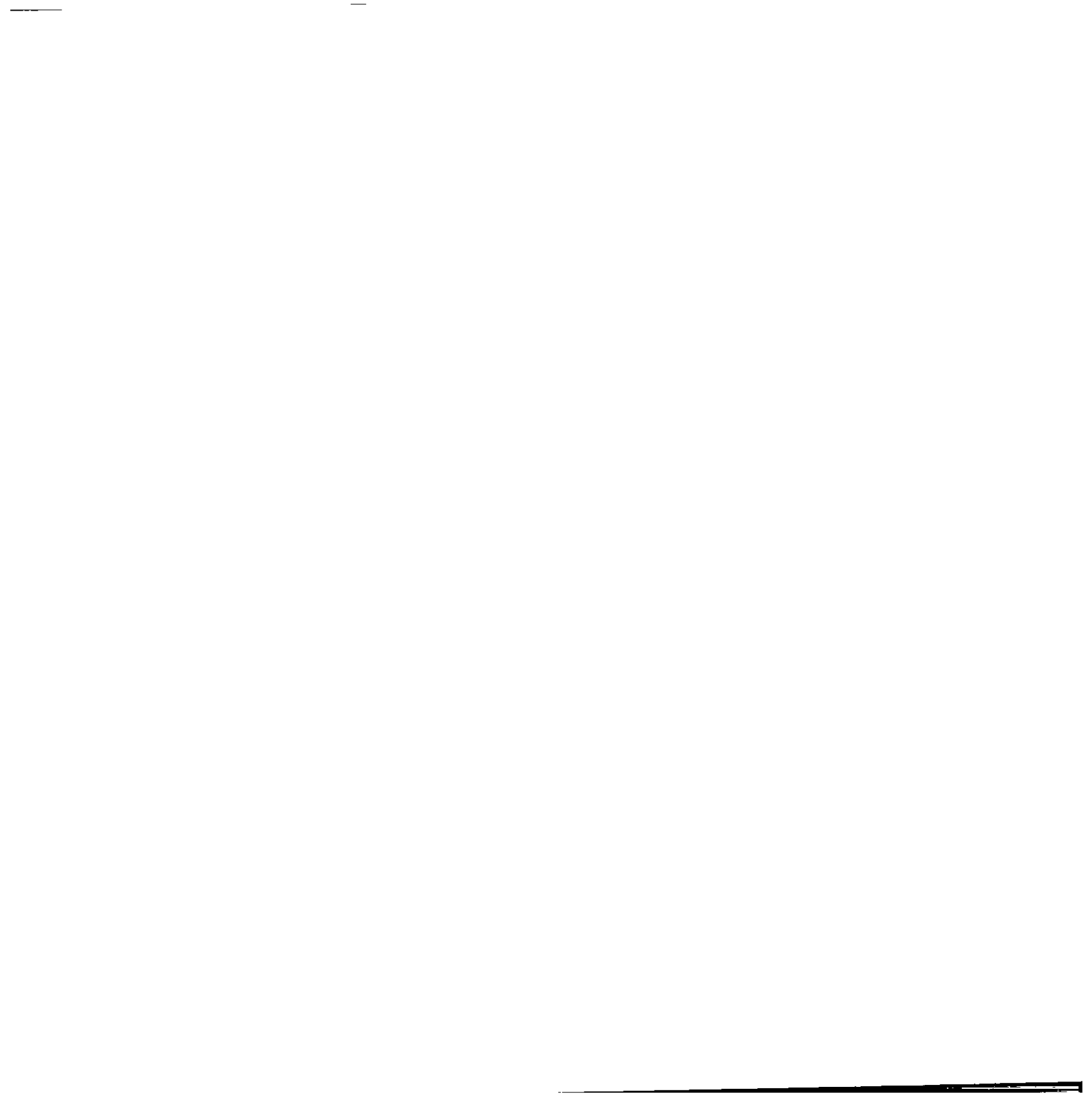
a. Ratification by three-fourths of the states	41.6%	24.8%
b. A two-thirds majority vote in a national referendum	7.7%	11.5%
c. A bill of ratification passed by a supermajority of Congress	6.3%	12.4%
d. A two-thirds vote in both Houses of Congress and Presidential ratification	43.2%	46.0%
e. Refused	1.1%	5.2%

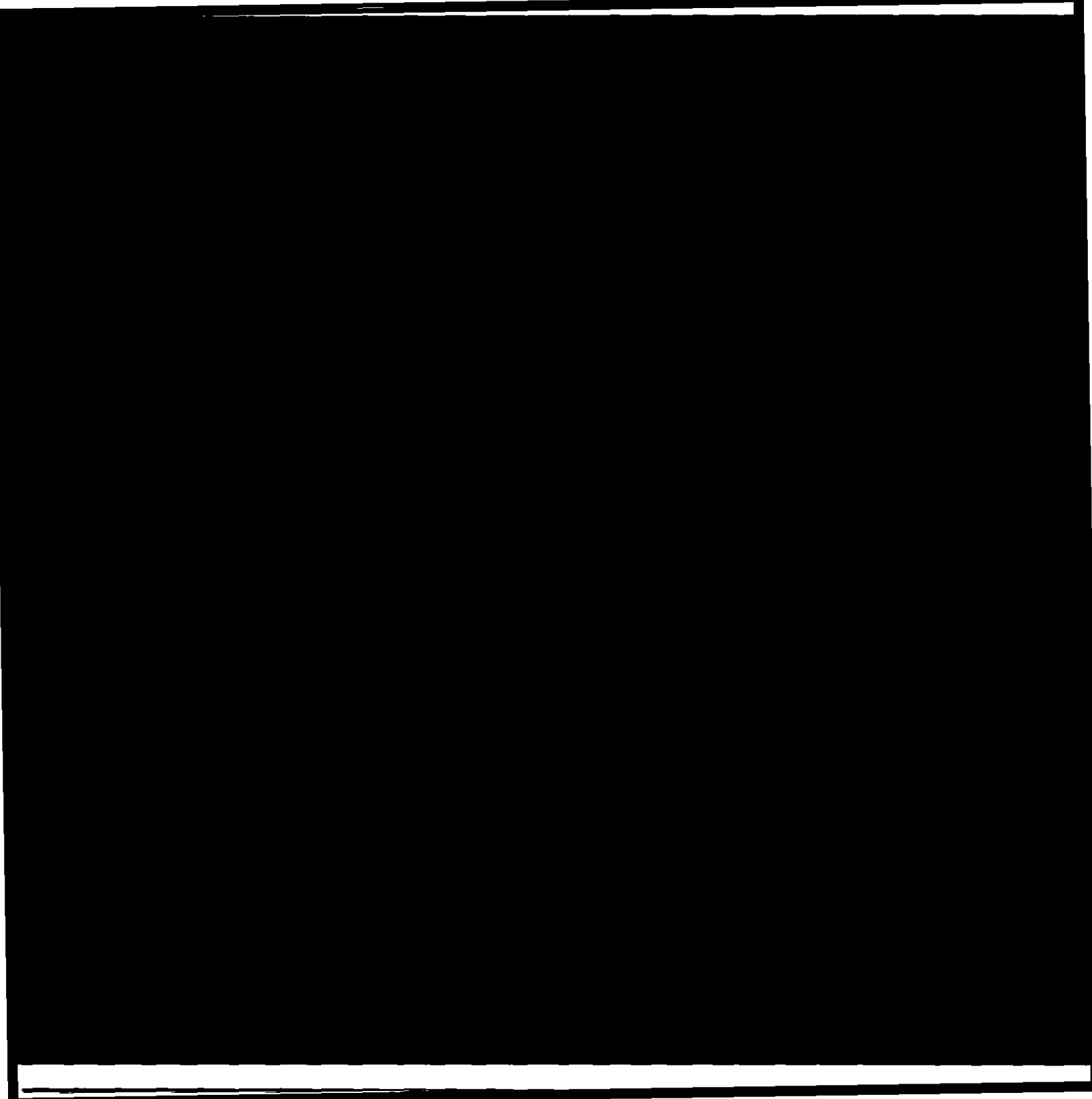


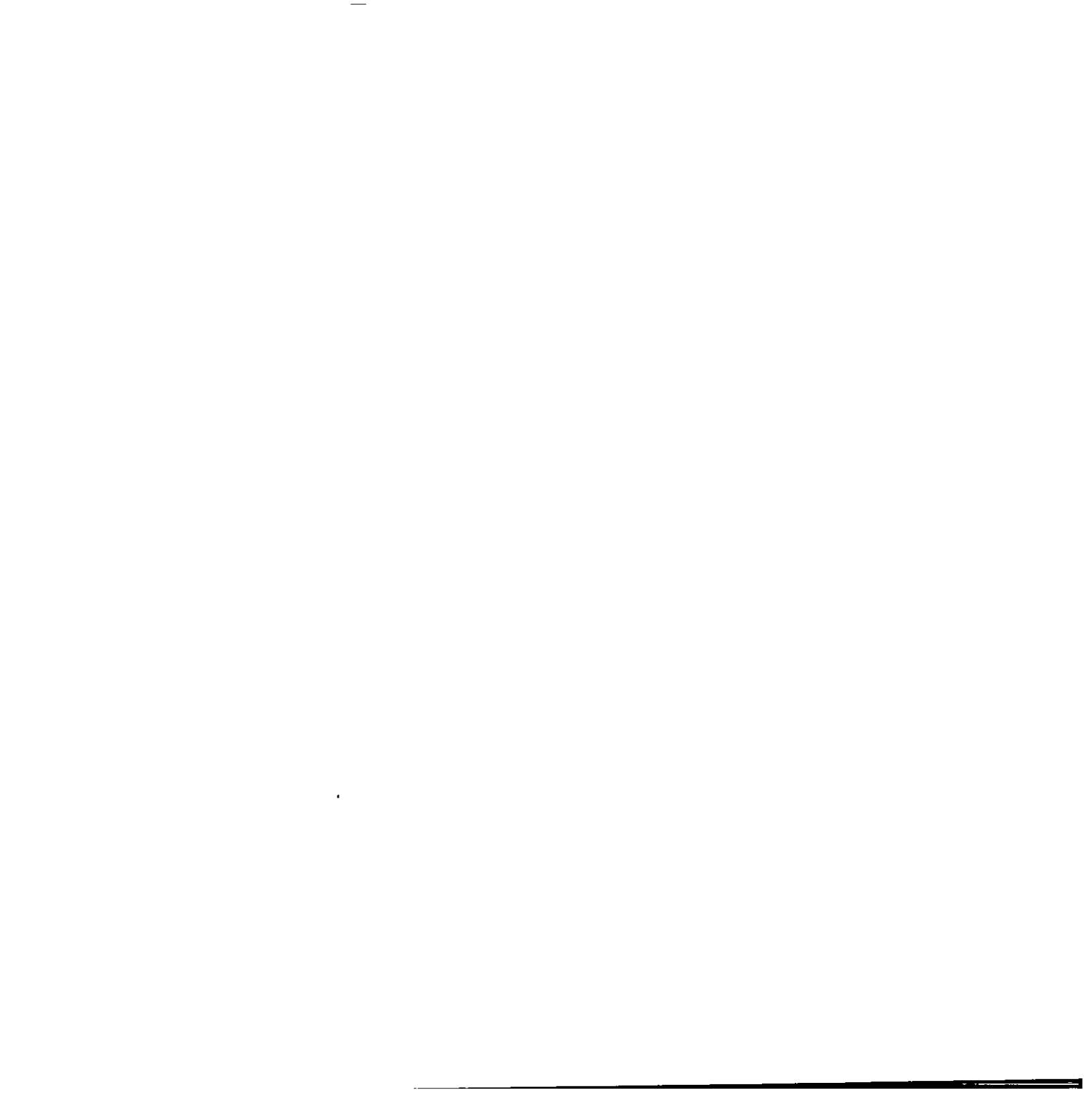
a. Congress	60.1%	43.1%
b. The President of the United States	35.0%	47.4%
c. The Supreme Court	0.7%	1.8%
d. None of the above	3.3%	5.3%
e. Refused	0.9%	2.5%

Q12. Habeas Corpus protects against...

a. Capital punishment	6.0%	8.9%
b. Cruel and unusual punishment	16.7%	23.5%
c. Illegal imprisonment	66.0%	50.6%
d. Taxation without representation	9.3%	12.3%
e. Refused	1.9%	4.7%







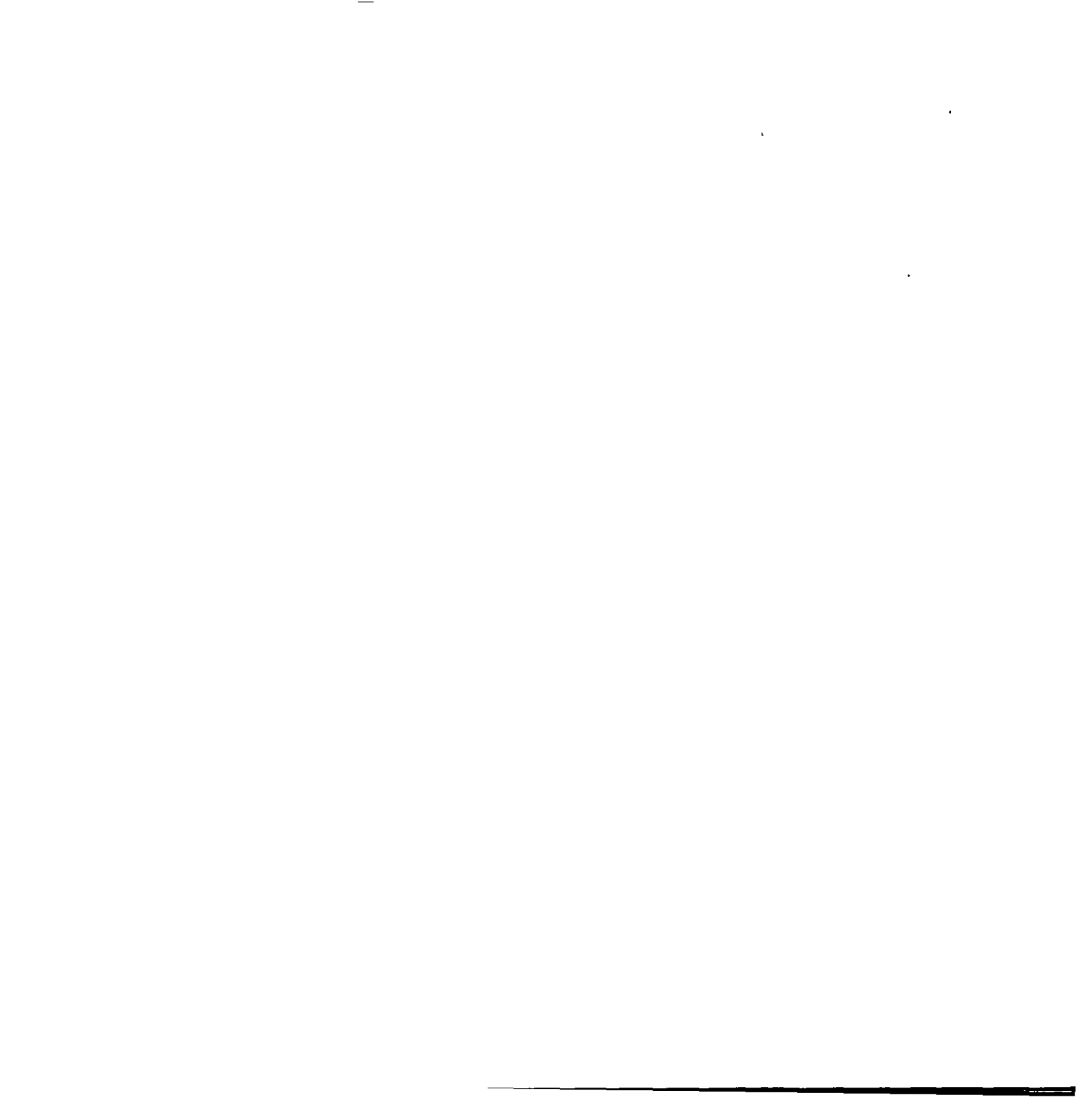


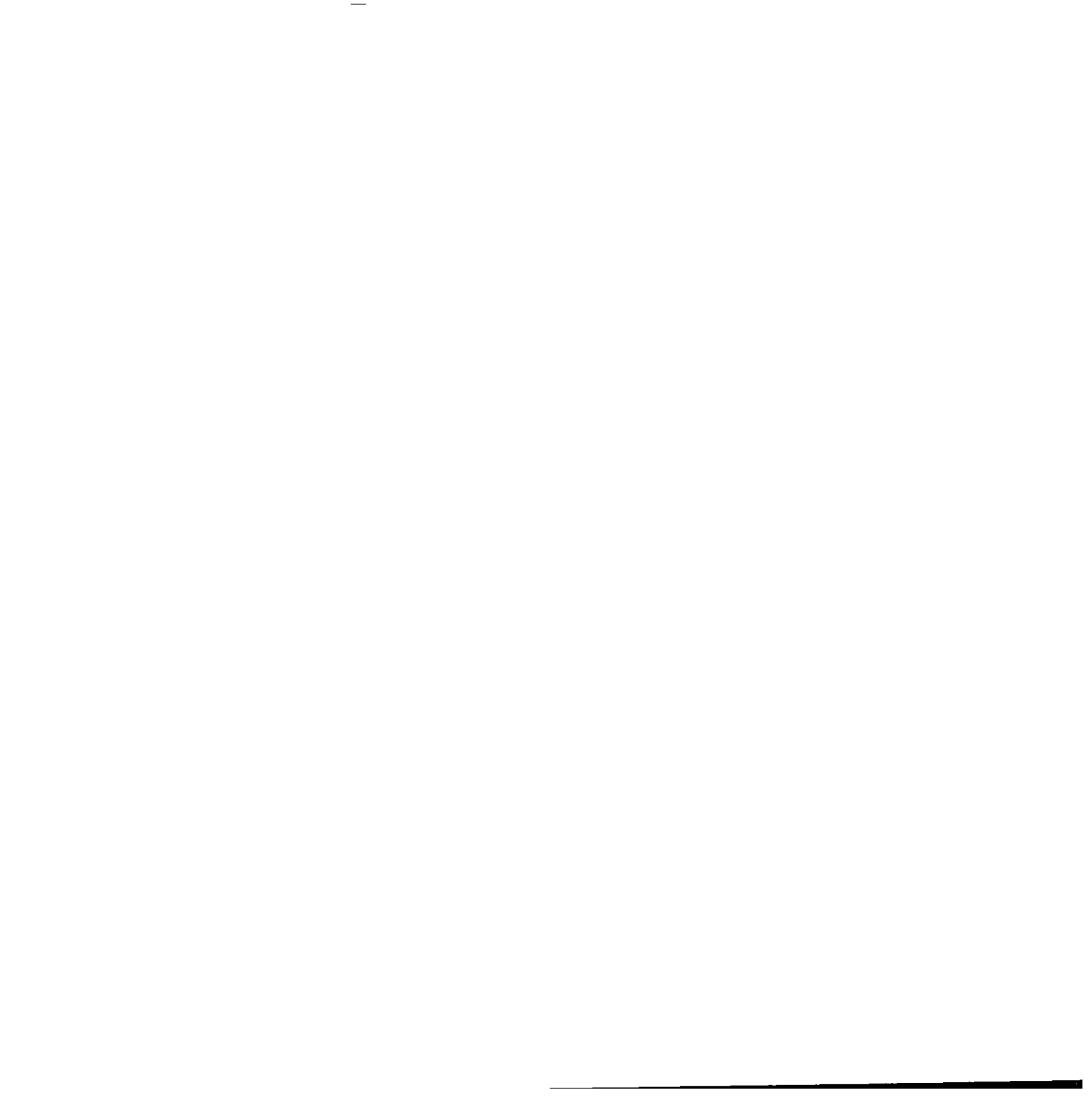
American Council of Trustees and Alumni
1730 M Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036

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Fax: 202-467-6784

Email: info@GoACTA.org Website: www.GoACTA.org





profession suggested that the rules compel on-going education about our political heritage by legislators—like nearly every other profession requires in our country. My legitimate, rule-based effort was ignored by both houses. However, Sen. Stevens (now sponsor of SCR1—then Rules Cmte Chairman) did have me in and heard me out. He showed comprehension of what I was getting at, but regrettably expressed his opinion that such an education focus was over the heads of most citizen legislators. The best we could hope for was chance driven forays by legislators into learning more about our political heritage. The reality of this shocked me with its hypocrisy—as these people were also the ones overseeing law and funding for public education. I then turned my efforts in the years since to encouraging civic participation by fellow citizens.

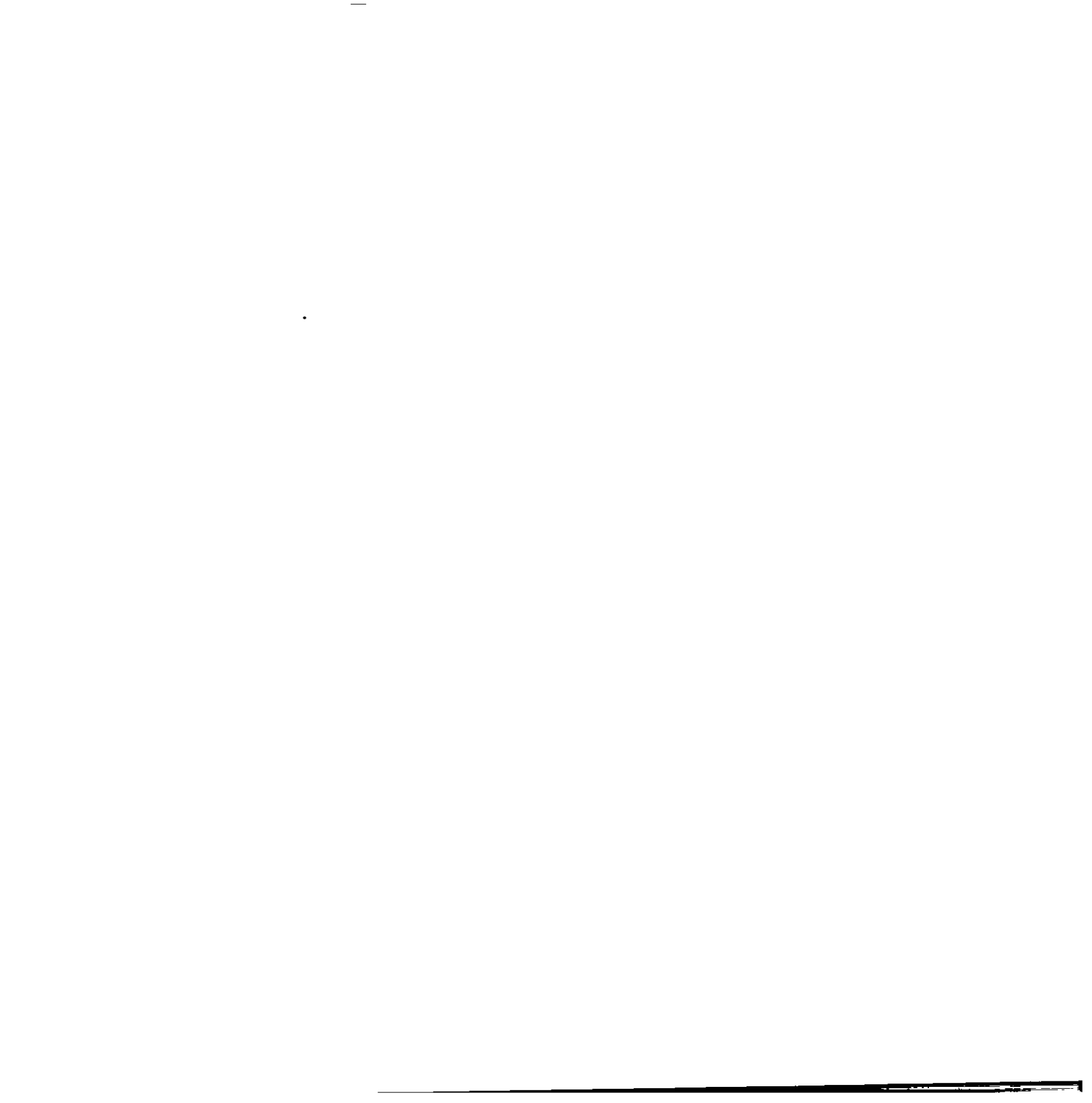
Now, what is the cure for this sort of human irrationality? It is the one executed by SCR1—organized, multifaction-balanced looking by a cooperative group of citizens. The SCR 1 task force should even encourage formation of satellite community task forces that are similarly composed. The specious nonsense that running such task forces is unaffordable should be answered by oath-keeping public officials putting their own money where their mouths are. I'm serious. Operating under principles from our political heritage, such task forces yield what are, literally and by dictionary definition, common sense results. Such principles include scientific discipline enforced on task force members to gather direct or verifiable observations and facts first before conclusions are attempted. This is what is called inductive reasoning—the hallmark of the scientific method.

I have spent over ten years encouraging civic participation by directly coaxing people to give their own ideas and advice to elected officials. My work enabled me to talk to literally several thousand people from Fairbanks through to Ketchikan, and from Kodiak through to Cordova. The SCR 1 Task Force needs to duplicate, almost at all costs, that depth of investigation. Their output then would become one of the most valuable works ever made available to the Alaska legislature—well beyond anything lobbyists could ever do.

Let me conclude with a very brief observation. You are the House Education Committee. Your legislative scope and function influences almost every thing the public and government does or could ever do. Therefore, let me leave this for you to think about for the rest of your legislative careers: The volume of true citizen participation in government of, for, and by the People is probably the most reliable test for the effectiveness of public education that could ever be.

Thank you for your attention. Good luck on your deliberations.

Stuart Thompson
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1-877-950-7980
lookitover@att.net



Support freedom

Oct. 5, 2010

To the editor:

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it" — Thomas Paine. Why do these words have more importance today than at any other time since the American Civil War?

America is being beaten up by its worst enemy: widespread unwillingness by people to do the work of liberty and bear its costs. The symptoms are obvious. Habitually, for an increasing number of Americans:

- soothing propaganda is valued over the realities of truth;
- government protection or the promise of Armageddon's oblivion is accepted at the expense of compromising personal ethics, responsibility and freedom of conscience;
- government funding and welfare for individuals, businesses and corporations is an acceptable substitute for independent economic initiative;
- standard of living is maintained with borrowed money rather than with the fruits of labor;
- exciting entertainment from cleverly presented nation-bullying or war is frequently valued over foreign relations based on trade.

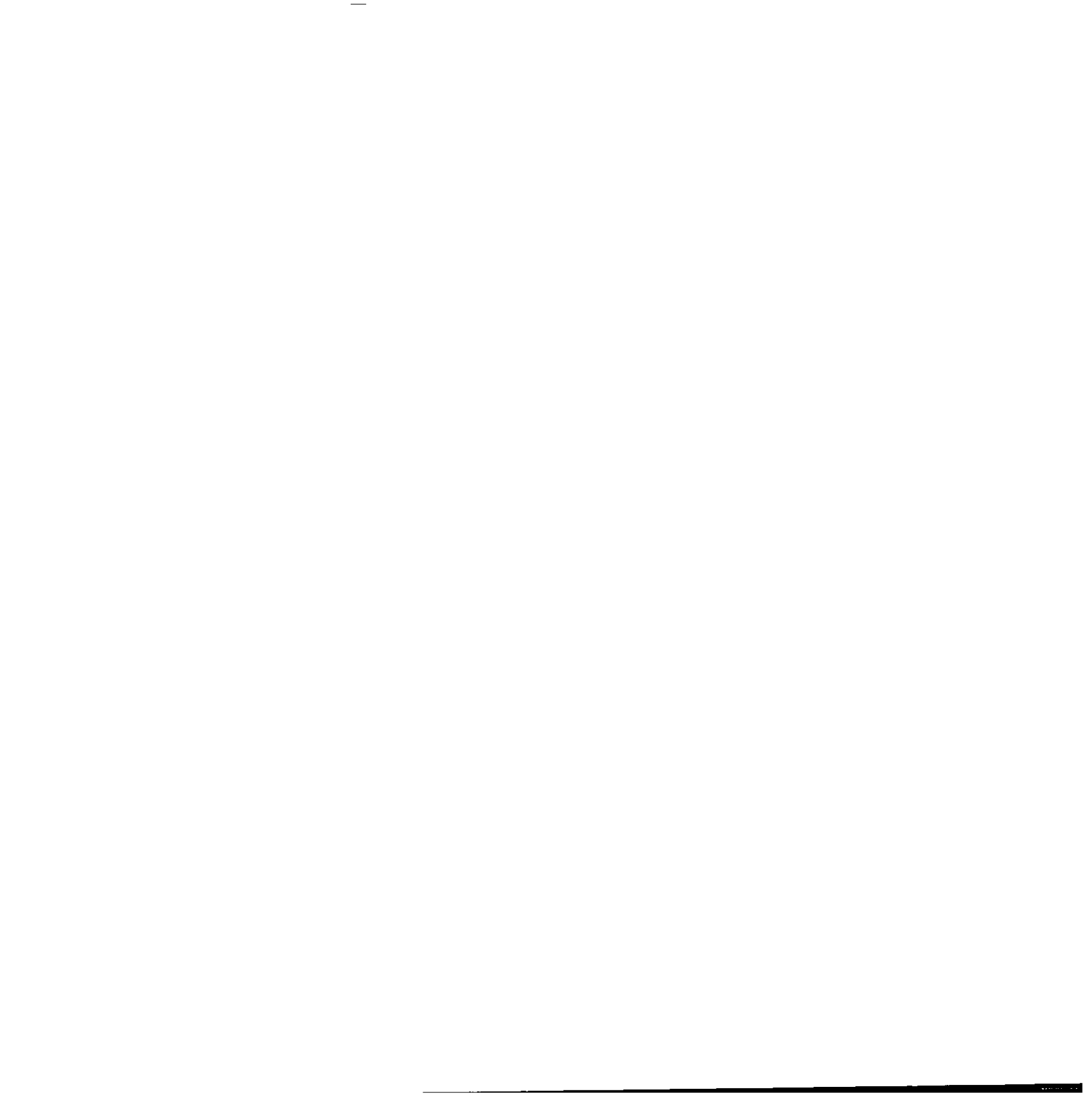
What about you? Is it that you feel politicians don't really listen? Do you feel politicians bully people into letting government set the rules for pursuit of happiness? Do you feel that politicians acquire the public's trust just so their "best judgments" and their secrecy practices "for your protection" can replace Constitution-driven rule of law?

Such feelings reveal the pitiful American tragedy that too many politicians merely practice elected aristocracy, not true representative government. Take courage this election season and consider these measures:

1. Make chosen politicians lead you, not rule you. Civilized liberty flourishes from encouraging its application, not ruling it.
2. Make chosen politicians treat their constituents as mentally capable human beings rather than as selfish animals to be protected, appeased or gratified.
3. Make chosen politicians free themselves from the mind-control of lobbyists and elite experts — by insisting they organize their constituents to function as their living computer for fact review.
4. Personally verify the honesty of the vote-counting process. Only slave-masters can expect to be automatically trusted.

These constitute some costs to remedy failing government and save America from disintegration. Are you willing to pay?

Stuart Thompson
Fairbanks



Citizens should participate in government

By Stuart Thompson

To the editor:

One of the most glaring hypocrisies in American politics today is the elaborate focus politicians have on possessing public trust. In the first place, public trust naturally results when officials operate using "Rule of Law," but is a forced contrivance when they operate using "Rule of Men." In the second place, for citizens to resign themselves to just trusting that elected officials will govern properly is exactly what empowered history's aristocracies. The rationale for aristocracy has always been that the general population has neither the time (from making a living) nor the understanding (from ignorance or mental incapacity) to truly contribute to government.

Therefore, it's shocking to see our elected officials using the same methods history's aristocrats did. Then as now, people are listened to merely to learn enough to know how to keep the majority docile and appeased. Then as now, money is spread around to popularize leadership, laws and regulations are enforced to satisfy popular prejudices, and favors are granted special interests that "creatively" lobby for such.

Here's plain evidence of what I mean. When was the last time any of your elected representatives asked you to personally contribute to working out policy or law to govern successful life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? And when did you do this duty because you were certain your contributions would get real respect?

So consider this. The only legitimate recipients of public trust, being faithful to our political heritage, are the minds of fellow citizens. Who are fellow citizens?

- True fellow citizens insist that all information vital to government policy-making honestly be made public so the fruits of citizen minds are relevant.
- True fellow citizens don't deny their mental liberty by compulsively delegating their right to think and understand to leaders, experts and the media — who are all vulnerable to using half-truths to manipulate.
- True fellow citizens personally comprehend the supremacy of each of the ideas of our constitutions. Hence they can withstand the temptation to handle emergencies by allowing constitutions and their dependent laws to be subordinated to leadership judgment and discretionary power.
- True fellow citizens protect their leaders and themselves from human imperfection by getting their sincere contributions to government accepted and used.

In this fashion, fellow citizens empower themselves to honor their pledges of allegiance to our constitutional republic. How many such citizens do you know?

—

Fellow citizens, practical decision-making in Washington, D.C., using freely verifiable information is vanishing. It is being replaced by prejudice-founded policy popularized by using clever half-truths.

Naturally, destructive reaction to such policies is hidden by authoritarian secrecy and claims of "national security." This has made our government take on the character of a mad dog — biting itself in reaction to its disease-driven lack of coordination.

Consequently, consider these three reasons why Bush and Cheney aren't being tried for impeachment by Congress, despite justification visible to anybody literate. These reasons also explain why around six of our past presidents, though impeachable, weren't tried either. They also challenge the worth of re-electing most long-term federal politicians.

1. The Declaration of Independence says, "Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed."

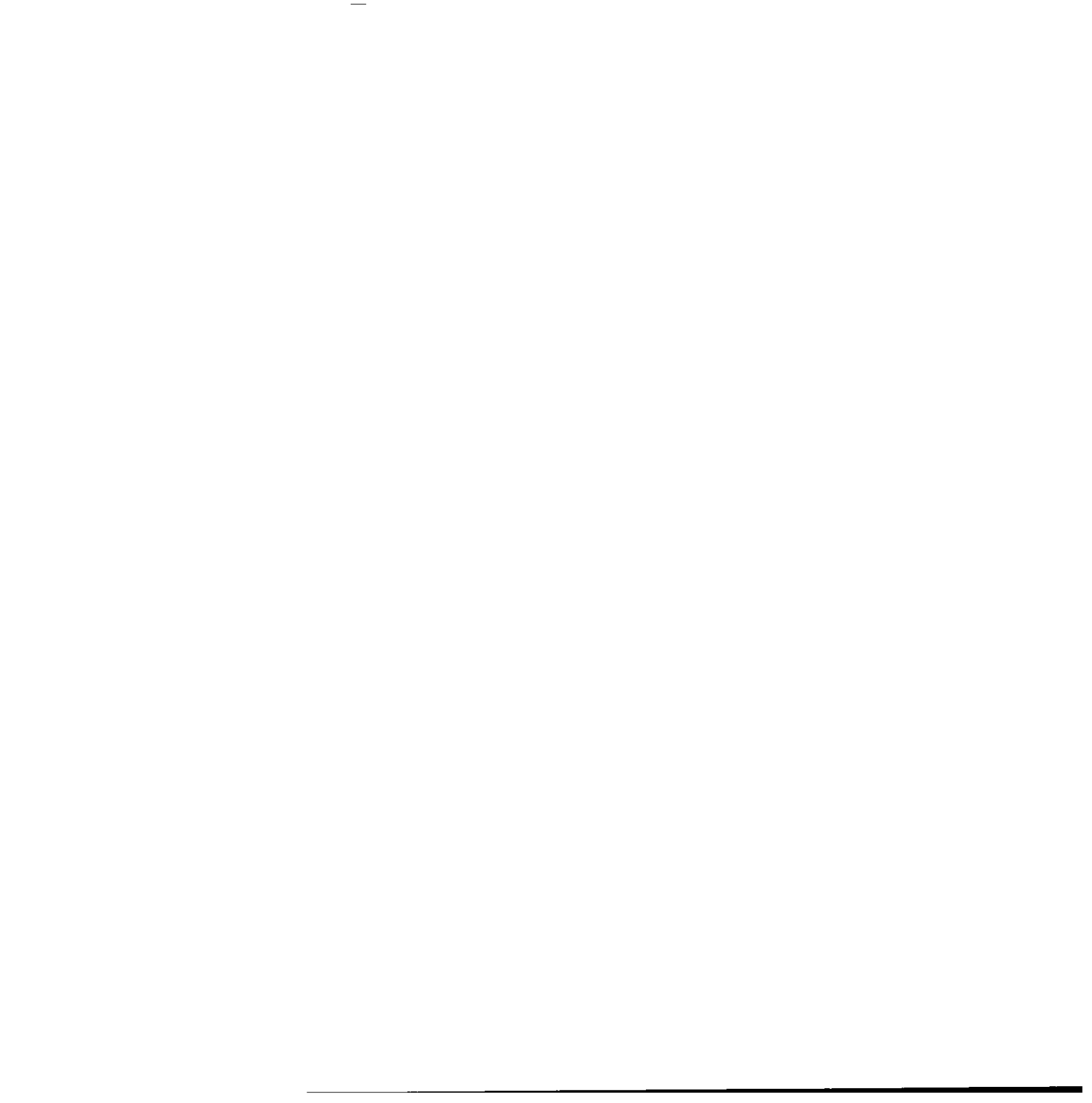
2. People smart enough to get elected aren't normally brainless puppets. Therefore, most U.S. representatives and senators would obviously have to be at least minor accessories to significant impeachable offenses by a president for such to be possible, or have knowingly ignored impeachable activity in oath-breaking subservience to congressional deal-making. Does anybody willingly help reveal personal guilt?

3. Too many Americans don't really believe our form of government works, despite oaths of office and pledges of allegiance. They naturally show this by insisting on or supporting the methods and devices of other forms of government to solve our country's problems. That encourages the mutation of our constitutional republic into a benevolent elected monarchy, aided and abetted by an elected nobility and guided by a chosen aristocracy of experts. Consequently, political high crimes to some are welcomed political achievements to others.

Do you believe in a constitutional republic for America? Prove it. Personally enforce the Constitution on government.

Stuart Thompson

Wasilla



Father: "What are you learning about in school these days?" Pre-teen: "Daddy, we're learning about the US Constitution. Some of it confuses me, though." Father: "What's confusing you? Maybe I can help." Pre-teen: "Well ...the Constitution says only Congress has the authority to declare war. My teacher says the last time Congress declared war was for WW2. So how can we be at war in Iraq and Afghanistan?" Father: "Well, something called a Congressional War Resolution authorized the President to decide whether to take America to war in those places. He decided and now runs the wars as Commander-In-Chief." Pre-teen: "I don't understand. Does the Constitution say that, as Commander-In-Chief, the President can make war when he decides to?" Father: Well, no. It's a specific congressional resolution under the War Powers Act that gives the President the authority to decide to make war." Pre-teen: "I'm still confused. Can Congress change how the Constitution says how to do things just by passing an act?" Father: "No. Changing the Constitution requires a constitutional amendment. The Constitution says how." Pre-teen: "Oh I remember. So was there a constitutional amendment that lets Congress let the President decide when and where to make war?" Father: "No. There are declared wars like WW2 and undeclared wars like Korea, Vietnam and Iraq." Pre-teen: "Daddy, what's the difference? Don't people die and get hurt and kids lose their parents in both?" Father: "Yes. But using the Constitution and government authority is very complicated. That's why we have leaders and experts to decide what to do and what laws mean when bad things happen." Pre-teen: "So even when I grow up, there will still be things I can't understand that special people must figure out and explain to me?" Father: "Yes. That's how things are." Pre-teen: "Then why do I have to learn about the Constitution when special people in government will always explain what it means for everybody?"

Citizen, can you answer that final question?

Stuart Thompson
PO Box 73042
Fairbanks, AK 99707
1-877-950-7980



To: Janet Ogan
Subject: Testimony - SCR 1 - Civics Education Task Force

Hi Janet,

Thank you for scheduling our SCR 1, relating to a civics education task force.

At this time we have 3 witnesses interested in testifying as follows:

1. Dr. Michael Poliakoff, Vice President of Policy, American Council of Trustees and Alumni
2. Dr. Lucian Spataro, CEO, Civics Education Initiative / Joe Foss Institute
3. Stuart Thompson, Palmer resident, civics advocate

This first two may have updated (short) power point presentations that I will get to you ASAP.

They will all be calling in off-net. Please confirm the number is still 1-844-586-9085. (?)

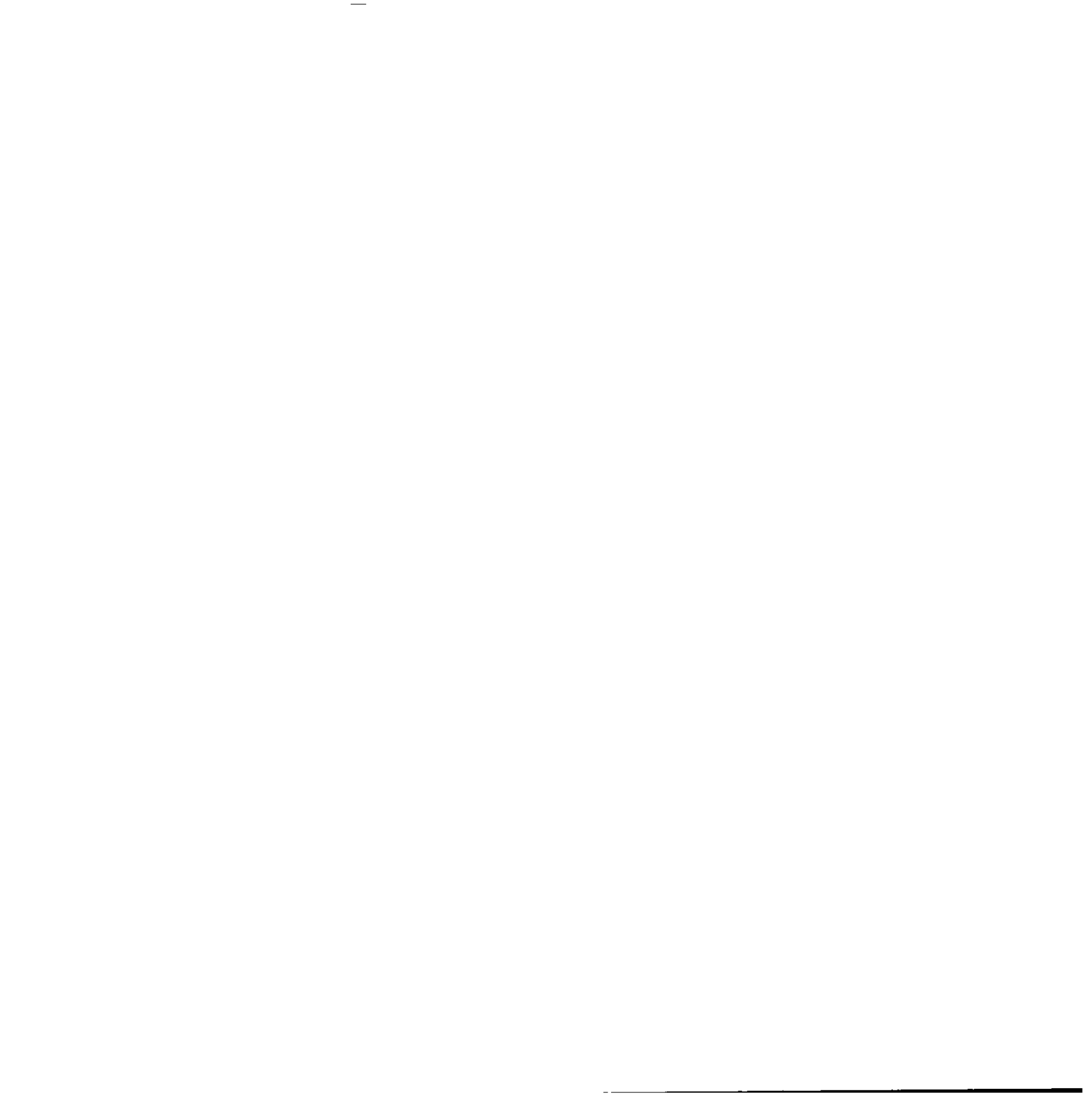
Let me know if you need anything else from us.

Thanks,
TIM

Tim Lamkin

Legislative Aide
Office of Senator Gary Stevens, PhD.
Chair, Legislative Council
Alaska State Senate

Office: 907-465-2705



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What problem is addressed by the Civics Education Initiative?

A. *Too few citizens know and understand basic American civics - how our government works and who we are as a nation. By example, according to the Pew Research Center, only about one-third of Americans can name the three branches of government, much less say what each does.*

Q. What is the impact of this lack of civics knowledge?

A. *If you don't know how our government works, you're not likely to be an active and engaged citizen. It's no wonder so few citizens vote, given this lack of basic civics knowledge.*

Q. Why isn't civics being better taught in our schools today?

A. *Education funding is increasingly tied to high stakes testing on reading, math and science, with a particular focus on STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering, and math. While important, this emphasis is leaving civics as a secondary subject or in some cases, not being taught all together.*

Q. How does the Civics Education Initiative address this problem?

A. *The Civics Education Initiative is simple in concept. It requires High School students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on 100 basic facts of US history and civics taken from the United States Citizenship Civics Test – the test all immigrants applying for US citizenship must pass.*

Q. How do immigrants taking the test compare to our own High School students?

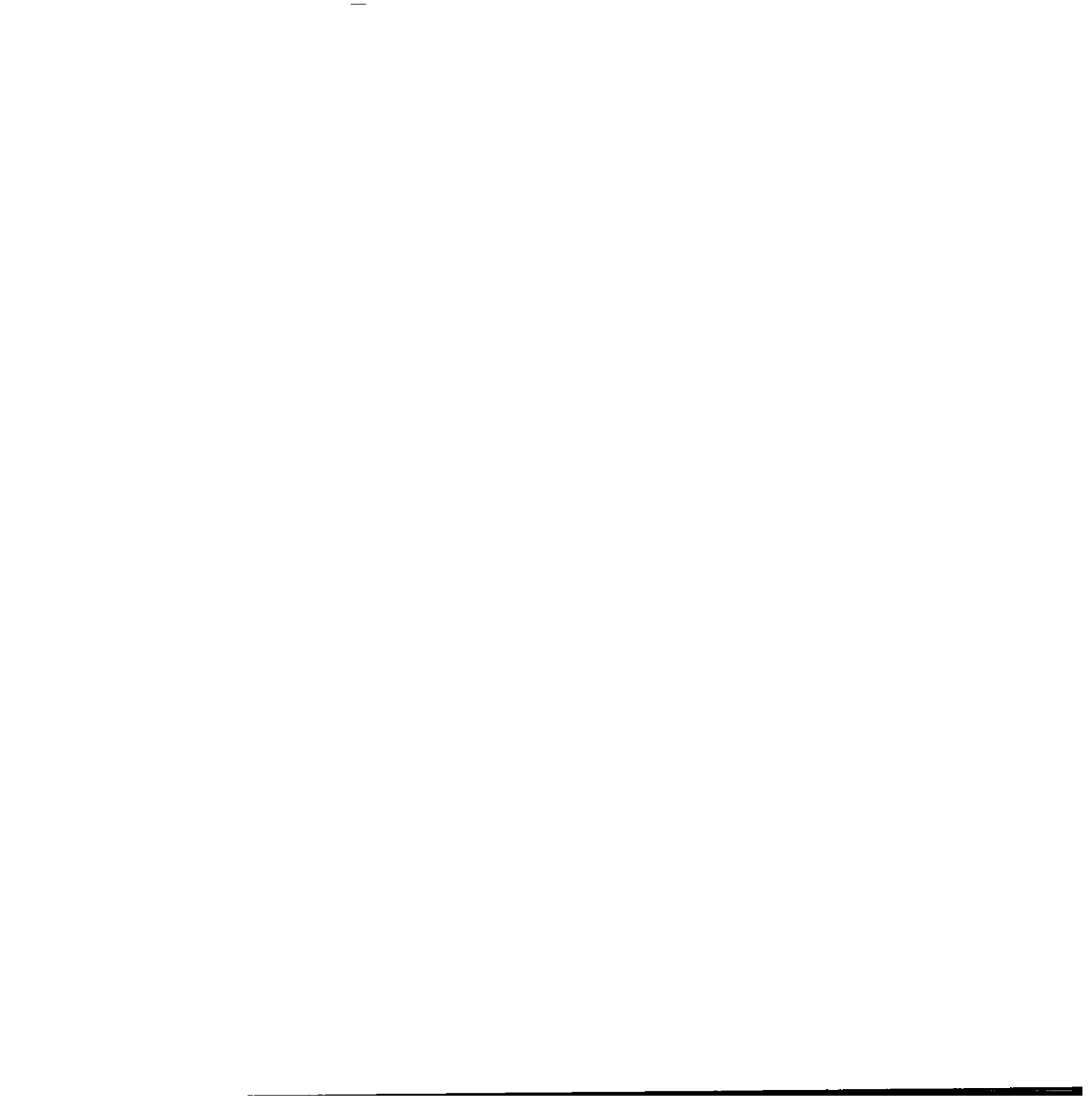
A. *According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), 92% of immigrants who take the required civics test for citizenship pass. Yet studies by the Annenberg Foundation show that a third of all U.S. citizens can't name even one branch of our federal government.*

Q. Why use this specific USCIS US Citizenship Civics test?

A. *We already require by Federal law that new citizens must learn these 100 facts so they can be prepared to be active and engaged citizens. By using this well established test, there is no cost to develop a new test, next to no cost involved to administer the test, and a myriad of study materials for this test already exist.*

Q. What does the Civics Education Initiative legislative language specifically say?

A. *All (State) High School students, attending any public or charter school, or a student seeking a general educational development (GED) equivalency, shall, as a condition of High School graduation or its equivalency, take and receive a passing grade on the United States Citizenship Civics Test, produced by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The test shall be the specific 100 questions used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and administered to all applicants for US citizenship. High School students shall be tested on all 100 questions, with a minimum score of 60% being required for passage. High School Students may take the test as many times as necessary for passage, but must pass the test prior to receiving a certificate of High School graduation or a GED equivalency. All (State) schools shall certify that a student has taken the test and received a passing grade on the test, in a way it deems as adequate to ensure the requirements of this Act are followed.*



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is the Civics Education Initiative a popular idea?

A. *Overwhelmingly so! A recent national survey showed 74 percent of likely voters support or strongly support the Civics Education Initiative, including overwhelming support among Men – 78%, Women – 71%, Republicans – 84%, Independents – 75%, Democrats – 68%, Anglos – 76%, Hispanics – 76%, and African American – 60%.*

Q. Who is promoting the Civics Education Initiative effort?

A. *The Civics Initiative www.CivicsEducationInitiative.com is project of the Joe Foss Institute www.JoeFossInstitute.org as part of its continuing efforts to promote an appreciation for America's freedoms, public service, patriotism and integrity. The Civics Education Initiative National Board of Advisors includes former US Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Pulitzer winning journalist Carl Bernstein and award winning actor Joe Mantegna.*

Q. What are the goals and timing of the Civics Education Initiative?

A. *The Civics Education Initiative has as its goal the enactment of legislation in all 50 states by a date certain – September 17, 2017 – the 230th anniversary of the US Constitution.*

Q. What other states have passed this initiative?

A. *Nine states passed the Civics Education Initiative in 2015 (AZ, ND, SD, UT, ID, TN, SC, LA, and WI). There are over two dozen additional states considering legislation for 2016.*

Q. How much will the test cost to implement?

A. *By using this well-established test and study materials that are already easily available online, as well as the online test portal provided by the Joe Foss Institute, several states have estimated little to no fiscal impact.*

Additionally, by promoting local control and maximum flexibility for individual school districts, costs can be minimal. Several states have controlled costs by allowing local school districts to determine how best to implement the test. By simply avoiding state-mandated reporting requirements the vast majority of costs associated with taking and passing the test can be eliminated.



Opening Remarks and Quotations

Mark Twain once said, "Citizenship is what makes a republic." Ask 10 adults what citizenship means to them and you'll probably get 10 different answers. Ask 10 kids the same question and chances are you'll get a shrug of the shoulders. Of course this won't be the case for all youth, but numerous studies have shown that a vast majority of America's K-12 students lack the basic understanding of how our country was founded, how it is governed and what it means to be a citizen in our democratic system.

One of the primary purposes of establishing public schools, as envisioned by Thomas Jefferson two hundred years ago, was to inculcate in our youth the civic virtues that would sustain our fledgling Republic.

American leaders, from Jefferson to Roosevelt, knew that informing and engaging the next generation of Americans on basic civics was vital to the survival of our republic. Unfortunately, 227 years after the signing of the Constitution, few American students understand basic facts about our government, its creation, or how it works.

Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor has termed this situation "the quiet crisis" in education, but I really believe it is the quiet crisis in America. I'm talking, of course, about the crisis in civics education. Our young people today face a crisis of knowledge and understanding of our Republic and the liberties granted in the Founding Documents. This civics education gap is a casualty of our hyper-focus on reading, math, science and technology.

What is the Civics Education Initiative?

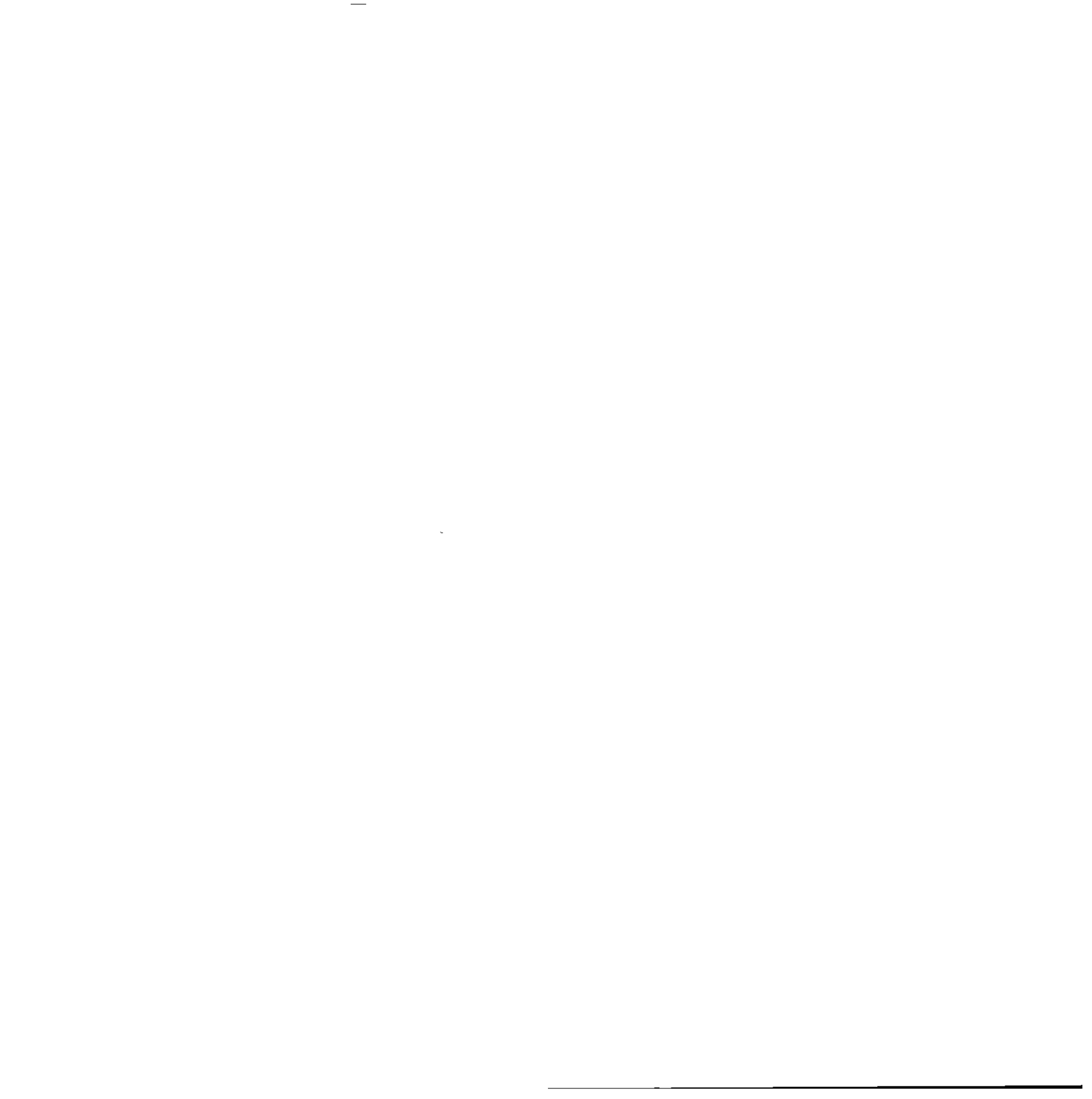
- The Civics Education Initiative is a simple concept. It requires high school students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on the 100 basic facts of U.S. history and civics taken from the United States Citizenship Civics Test – the test all new U.S. citizens must pass (91% of immigrants pass on their first attempt).

The goal is to pass legislation in all 50 states by September 17, 2017, the 230th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution

The Civics Education Initiative is a first step to ensure all students are taught basic civics about how our government works and who we are as a nation; facts every student should know to be ready for active, engaged citizenship.

Who is behind this?

The Civics Education Initiative was created in 2014 by the Joe Foss Institute, a non-profit, nonpartisan organization focused on closing the civics education gap and preparing America's youth for civic engagement



JCI has served nearly 2 million students nationally through its programs, including the Veterans Inspiring Patriotism (VIP) program which recruits and trains veterans to make classroom presentations in elementary and secondary schools and deliver educational materials including the U.S. flag and copies of the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights.

About the Initiative

Prior to becoming an American citizen, immigrants must pass a test on basic facts of United States history and government. Over 91% of new immigrants pass the test on their first attempt.

Unfortunately, the level of knowledge among everyday Americans and our native-born high school students is far lower. According to a survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, only 36% of Americans could name all three branches of government. Worse yet, only 38% could successfully identify which party controlled the U.S. Senate or House of Representatives.

What other states have passed this initiative?

Nine states passed the Civics Education Initiative in 2015 (AZ, ND, SD, UT, ID, TN, SC, LA, and WI). There are 26 additional states considering legislation for 2016. (Map included on CEI handout)

Public Support

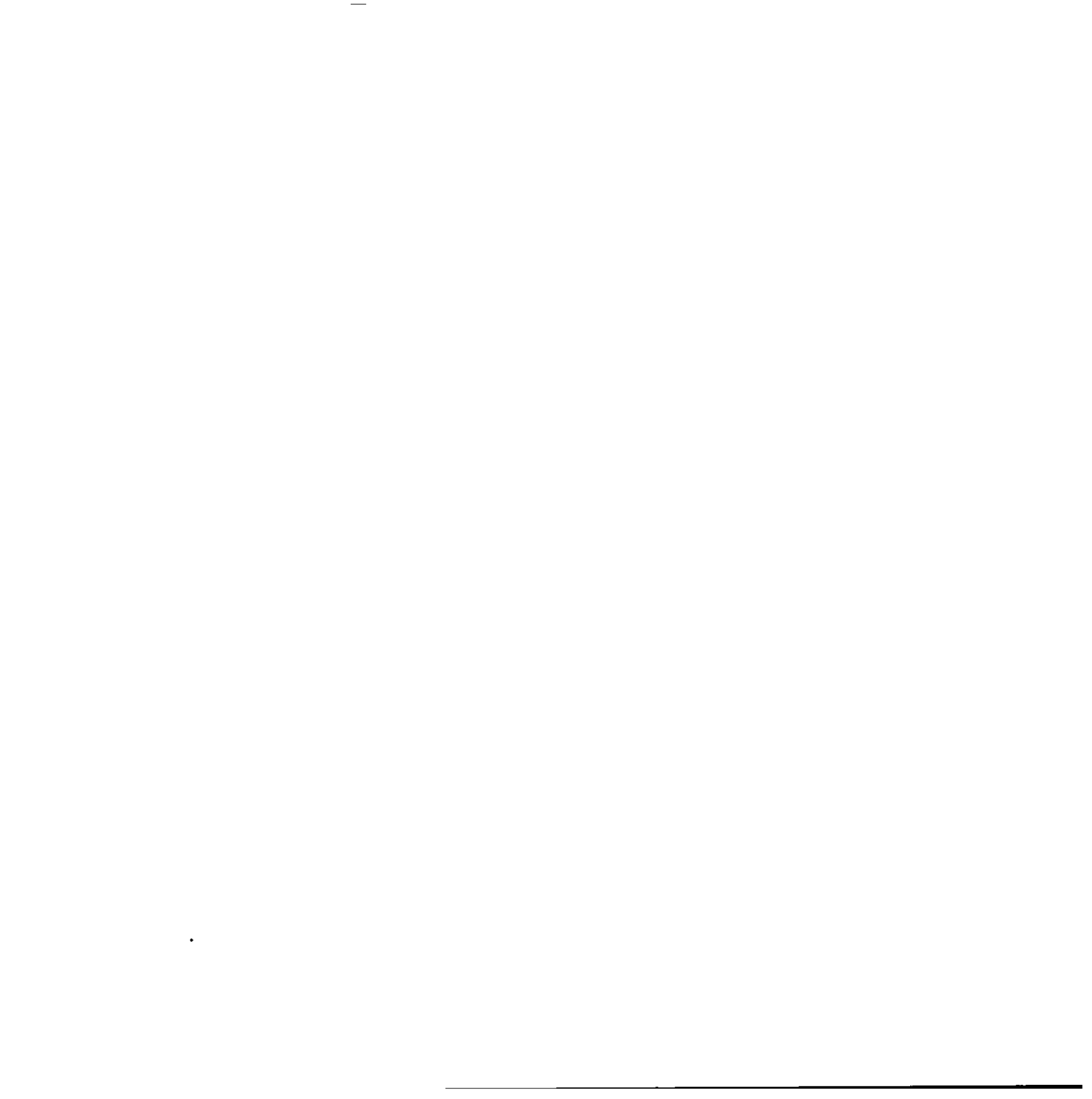
We've surveyed Republicans, Democrats and Independents from across the country. Americans across the political spectrum overwhelmingly support measurable civics education in our schools. Over 70% of the public would vote YES on an initiative requiring high school students to pass the same civics exam that all immigrants must pass to become US citizens in order to graduate.

Additionally, over 65% of voters, left, right and independent, said they were more likely to support legislators who supported such a proposal.

Do we really have a civics education problem?

Absolutely, a number of studies and surveys confirm Americans (and young people specifically) are not proficient in the basics of U.S. civics, history and geography covered on the U.S. Customs and Immigrations Services (USCIS) citizenship civics exam.

What percentage of American high school students do you think can identify the presidents on a penny or a nickel? A recent study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress showed that only 14 percent of high school seniors can identify Thomas Jefferson as the author of the Declaration of Independence. It doesn't get better. Only 9 percent of 4th grades can identify a picture of Abraham Lincoln and list two reasons why he was important



can't name even one branch of our federal government.

Isn't this already covered by existing state standards?

The Civics Education Initiative is not intended to introduce new academic standards. Its purpose is to elevate these basic facts about our republic as the floor—not the ceiling—of what we believe students should know about how our government works and who we are as a nation.

The Civics Education Initiative isn't just another test standardized test. Working to learn the most basic, foundational facts about our nation and being exposed to the same test all new immigrants must take to become U.S. citizens is intended to be a *learning experience*. This is the civics equivalent of knowing your multiplication tables.

The concept would allow individual districts, schools and teachers to cover these basic facts and administer the test in a way they deem adequate and constructive. The test itself can be folded into existing curriculum and classroom activities so as to reduce the impact on class time. For example, it could be administered as a pre-test activity at the start of a course or the questions could be split up across different courses and units across several grade levels.

There is an online testing portal created expressly for the Civics Education Initiative, as well as a variety of free study guides. Regardless of exactly how each school implements the Civics Education Initiative, it clearly would be a very different experience than the standardized testing model in which students are pulled out of class.

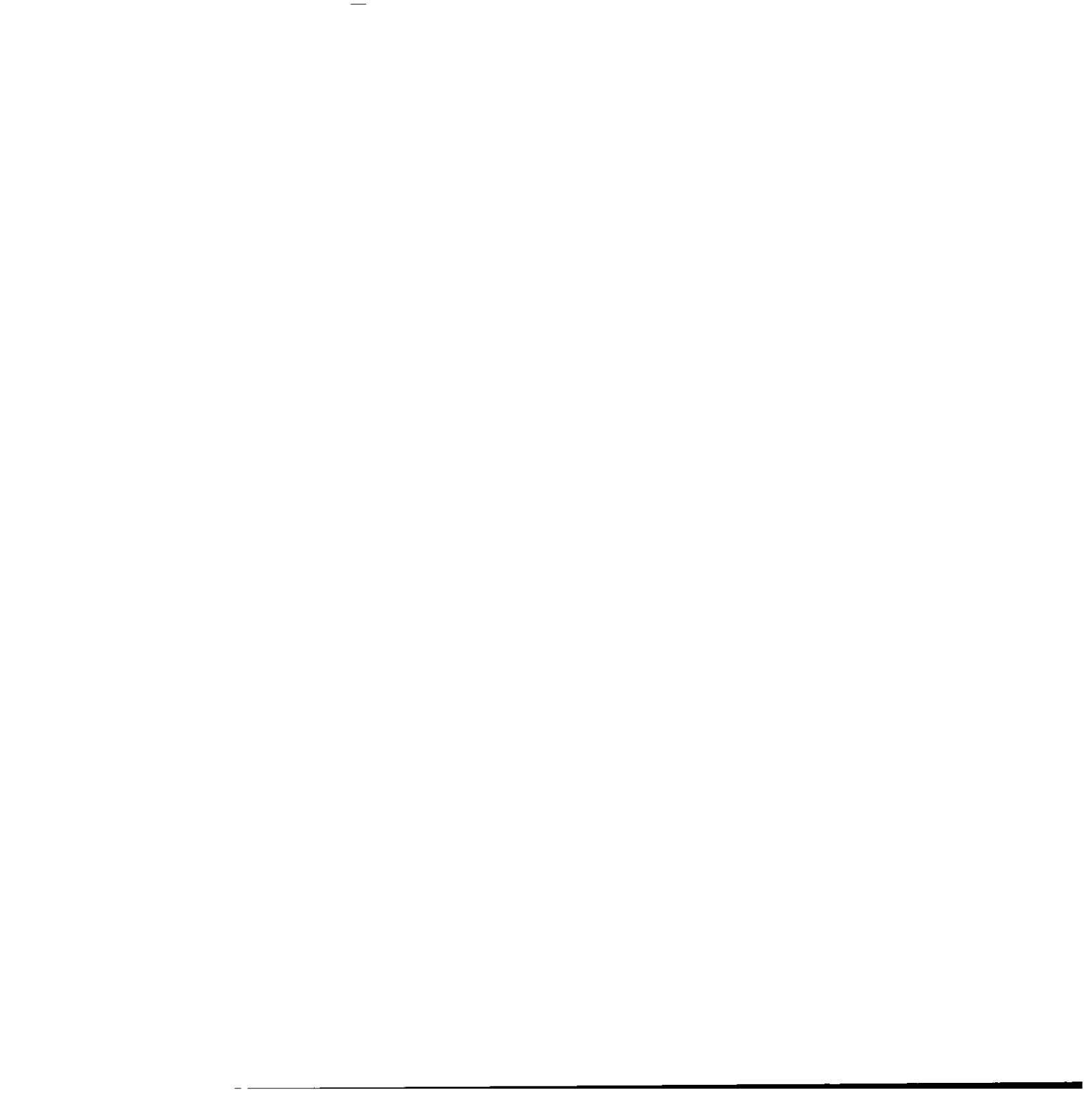
This test will put undue pressure on school districts and our students.

That is certainly not the intent and it is a highly doubtful outcome. The legislation was specifically designed to provide districts, schools, teachers and students with maximum flexibility to make the Civics Education Initiative a meaningful and achievable goal for everyone.

Nearly 92% of new immigrants applying for citizenship pass this test on their first attempt. I would hope our students could do as well or better. Those that don't pass the first time can try as many times as they need and, again, the questions and study aides are already widely available and free online.

The initiative also promotes local control and maximum flexibility for individual school districts. In North Dakota for example, the law passed by CEI allowed for local school districts to determine how best to implement the test, rather than relying on a method mandated by the state.

The initiative is not intended to be a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it establishes a baseline of knowledge to ensure that high school students know at least as much about the fundamentals of U.S.



But isn't this test just rote memorization? We need our students to be thinking critically and analyzing why American Government is set up this way, not just reciting dates and facts.

If students are to analyze and think critically about civics and government, they need to first understand the basic facts about American government. Before kids learn to read they need to know the alphabet.

How much will the test cost to implement?

By using this well-established test and study materials that are already easily available online, as well as the online test portal provided by the Joe Foss Institute, several states that have passed this into law have estimated no fiscal impact. By promoting local control and maximum flexibility for individual school districts, costs are eliminated. Several states are allowing local school districts to determine how best to implement the test. By simply avoiding state-mandated reporting requirements the vast majority of costs associated with taking and passing the test are eliminated.

Do we really need a test for civics?

The old adage in education is, "If it is tested it is taught." That means this subject matter needs to be on a test that counts. Today, a test that counts is one that is tied to either graduation or performance for funding in the schools.

For any educators on the committee, I have a question for you. What is the most asked question by your students during a lecture? "Is this going to be on the test?" If you say YES, they all lean forward, take notes, and are engaged. On the other hand, if you say NO, the entire class leans back and you can see them relax and drift off. As this applies to civics and our country, we want our students leaning forward and engaged.

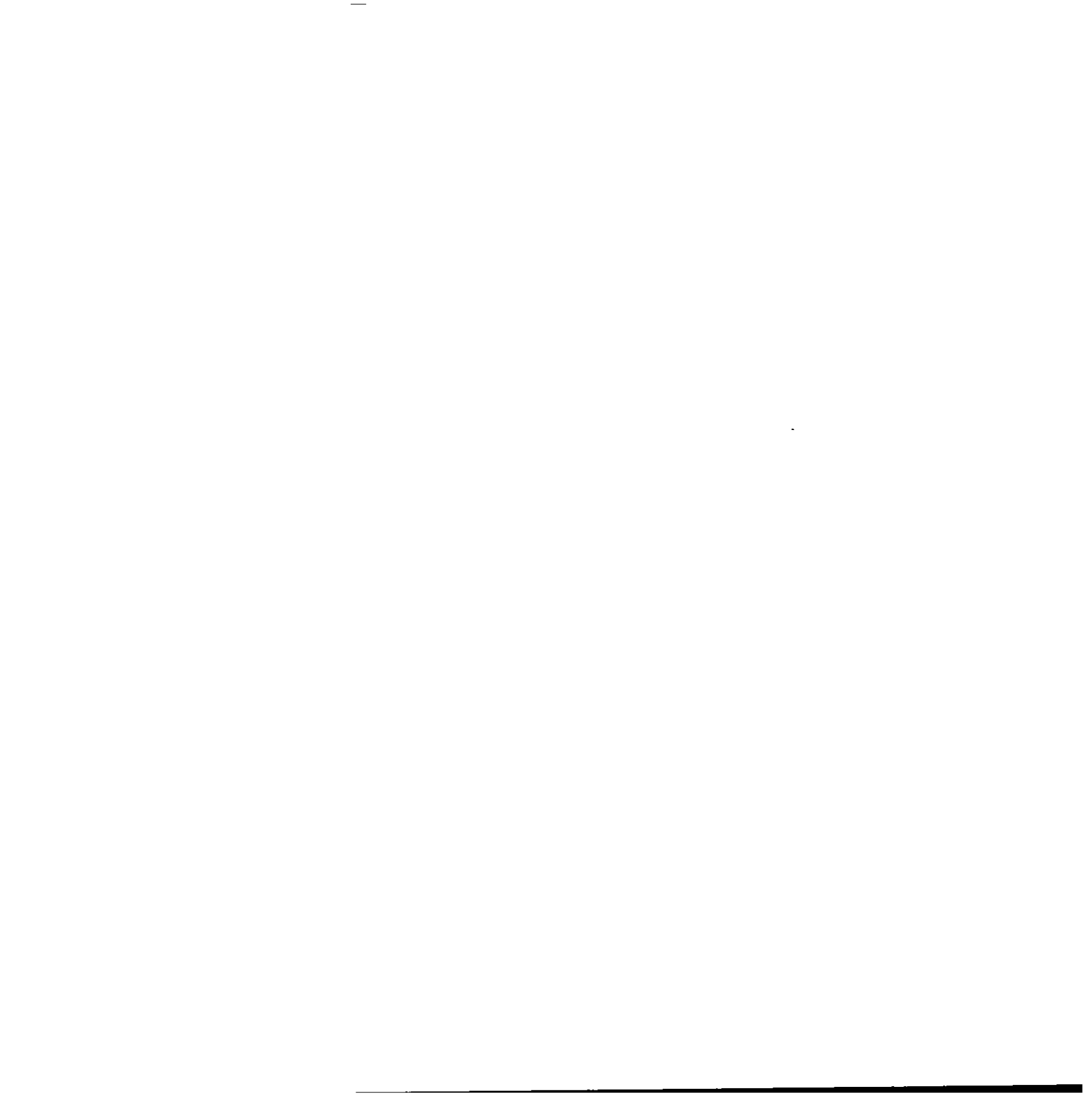
What about students with special needs?

Most states that have adopted the test allow for exemptions if deemed appropriate by a student's IEP team.

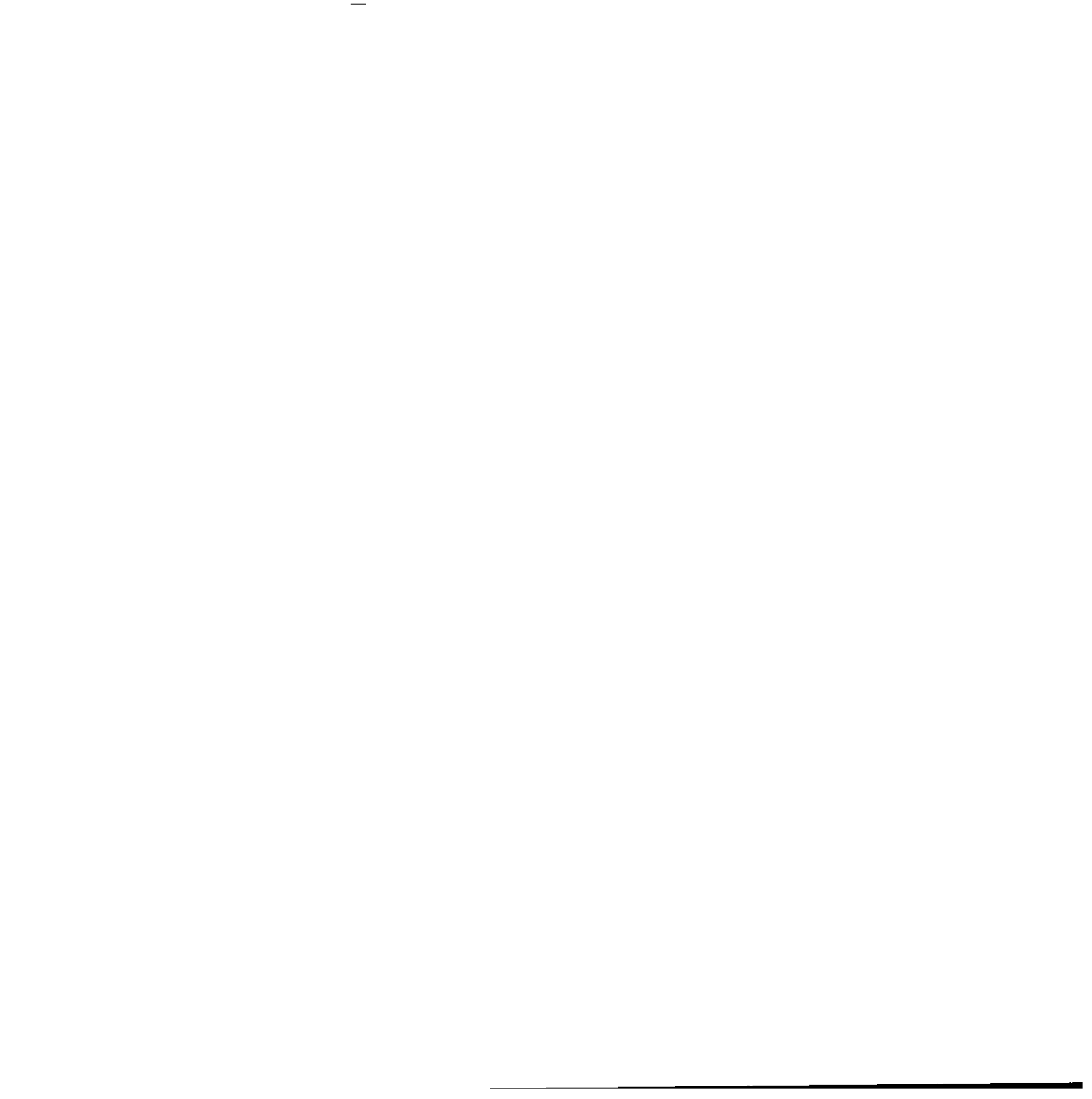
Closing

Informing and engaging the next generation of Americans on basic civics is vital to the survival of our Republic. The people who favor this initiative have widely differing political beliefs, but one thing we all share is the belief that it is important for all Americans to know about the first principles of our Constitutional government.

We believe our children should not only be expected to have a basic understanding of the principles upon which our nation was founded, they *deserve* to be armed with that information in their adult lives as they vote for representatives who will make critical decisions about the future of our nation, our state and our



Help us put civics back on the front burner where it belongs so our students graduate as actively engaged and responsible citizens. Help us put civics on a test that matters. On behalf of our American veterans who have made great sacrifices to preserve the many freedoms we all enjoy, I ask that you join us in support of this legislation to ensure that all high school students learn these important facts about our government, our nation, our values and responsibilities in order to promote active citizenship.



RETURN COMPLETED QUIZ TO SENATOR STEVENS

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Civics (History and Government) Questions for the Naturalization Test

The 100 civics (history and government) questions and answers for the naturalization test are listed below. The civics test is an oral test and the USCIS Officer will ask the applicant up to 10 of the 100 civics questions. An applicant must answer 6 out of 10 questions correctly to pass the civics portion of the naturalization test.

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

A: Principles of American Democracy

1. What is the supreme law of the land?

2. What does the Constitution do?

3. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?

4. What is an amendment?

5. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?

6. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?*

7. How many amendments does the Constitution have?

8. What did the Declaration of Independence do?

10. What is freedom of religion?

11. What is the economic system in the United States?*

12. What is the “rule of law”?

B: System of Government

13. Name one branch or part of the government.*

14. What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?

15. Who is in charge of the executive branch?

16. Who makes federal laws?

17. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?*

18. How many U.S. Senators are there?

19. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?

20. Who is one of your state’s U.S. Senators now?*

21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?

22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?

23. Name your U.S. Representative.

25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?

26. We elect a President for how many years?

27. In what month do we vote for President?*

28. What is the name of the President of the United States now?*

29. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now?

30. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President?

31. If both the President and the Vice President can no longer serve, who becomes President?

32. Who is the Commander In Chief of the military?

33. Who signs bills to become laws?

34. Who vetoes bills?

35. What does the President's Cabinet do?

36. What are two Cabinet-level positions?

37. What does the judicial branch do?

38. What is the highest court in the United States?

40. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States now?

41. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the federal government. What is one power of the federal government?

42. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?

43. Who is the Governor of your state now?

44. What is the capital of your state?*

45. What are the two major political parties in the United States?*

46. What is the political party of the President now?

47. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

C: Rights and Responsibilities

48. There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.

49. What is one responsibility that is only for United States citizens?*

50. Name one right only for United States citizens.

51. What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?

52. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?

54. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?*

55. What are two ways that Americans can participate in their democracy?

56. When is the last day you can send in federal income tax forms?*

57. When must all men register for the Selective Service?

AMERICAN HISTORY

A: Colonial Period and Independence

58. What is one reason colonists came to America?

59. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?

60. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?

61. Why did the colonists fight the British?

62. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

63. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

64. There were 13 original states. Name three.

65. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?

66. When was the Constitution written?

67. The Federalist papers supported the passage of the Constitution. Name one of the writers.

68. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?

69. Who is the "Father of Our Country"?

70. Who was the first President?*

B: 1800s

71. What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?

72. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1800s.

73. Name the U.S. war between the North and the South.

74. Name one problem that led to the Civil War.

75. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?*

76. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?

77. What did Susan B. Anthony do?

C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information

78. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.*

79. Who was President during World War I?

81. Who did the United States fight in World War II?

82. Before he was President, Eisenhower was a general. What war was he in?

83. During the Cold War, what was the main concern of the United States?

84. What movement tried to end racial discrimination?

85. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?*

86. What major event happened on September 11, 2001, in the United States?

87. Name one American Indian tribe in the United States.

INTEGRATED CIVICS

A: Geography

88. Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.

89. What ocean is on the West Coast of the United States?

90. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?

91. Name one U.S. territory.

92. Name one state that borders Canada.

93. Name one state that borders Mexico.

94. What is the capital of the United States?*

B: Symbols

96. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?

97. Why does the flag have 50 stars?*

98. What is the name of the national anthem?

C: Holidays

99. When do we celebrate Independence Day?*

100. Name two national U.S. holidays.

Students, Citizens and Our Nation's Future

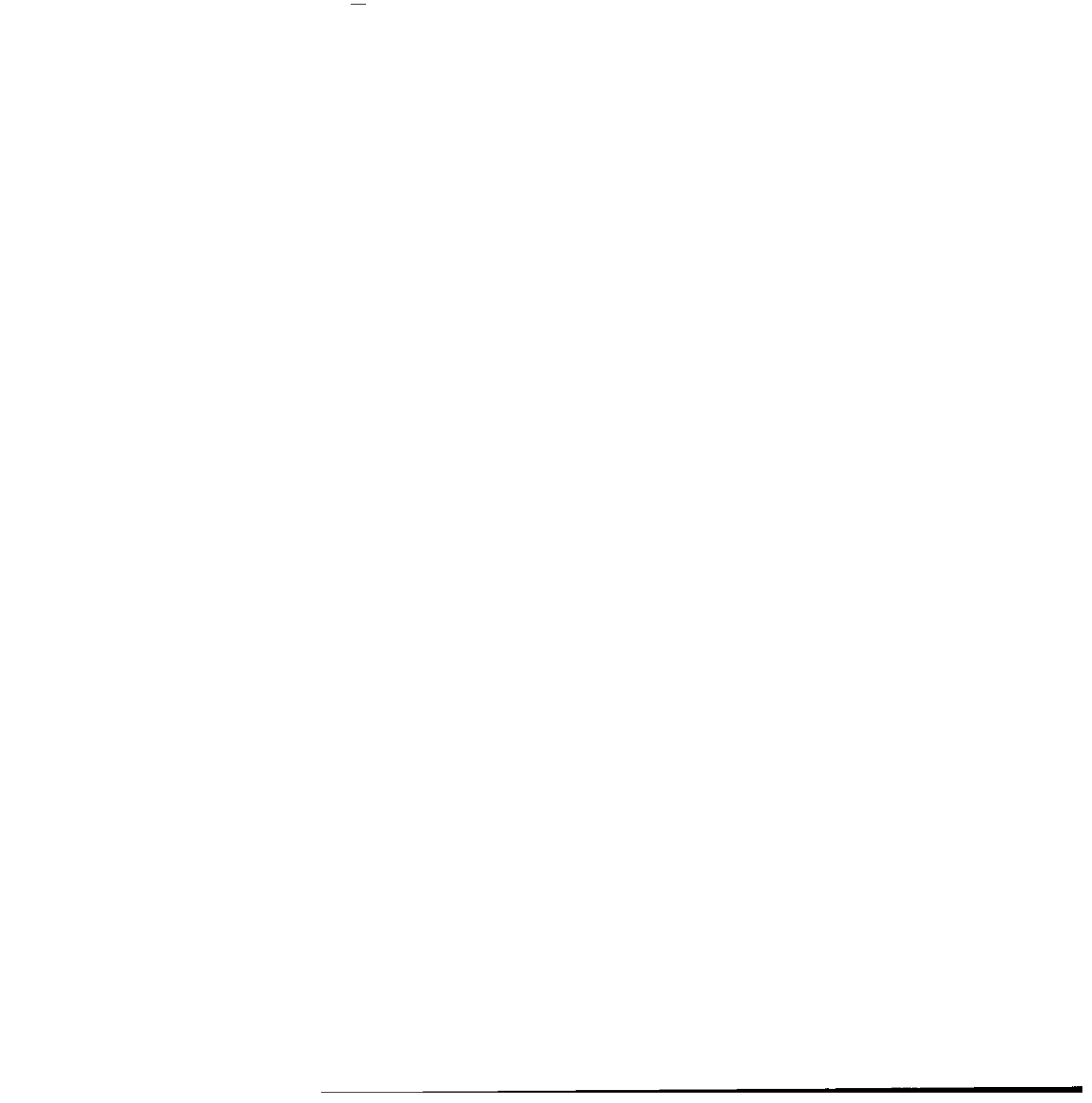
**Alaska State Senate Education Committee
Hearing on SCR1
February 26, 2015**

Michael Poliakoff

American Council of Trustees and Alumni



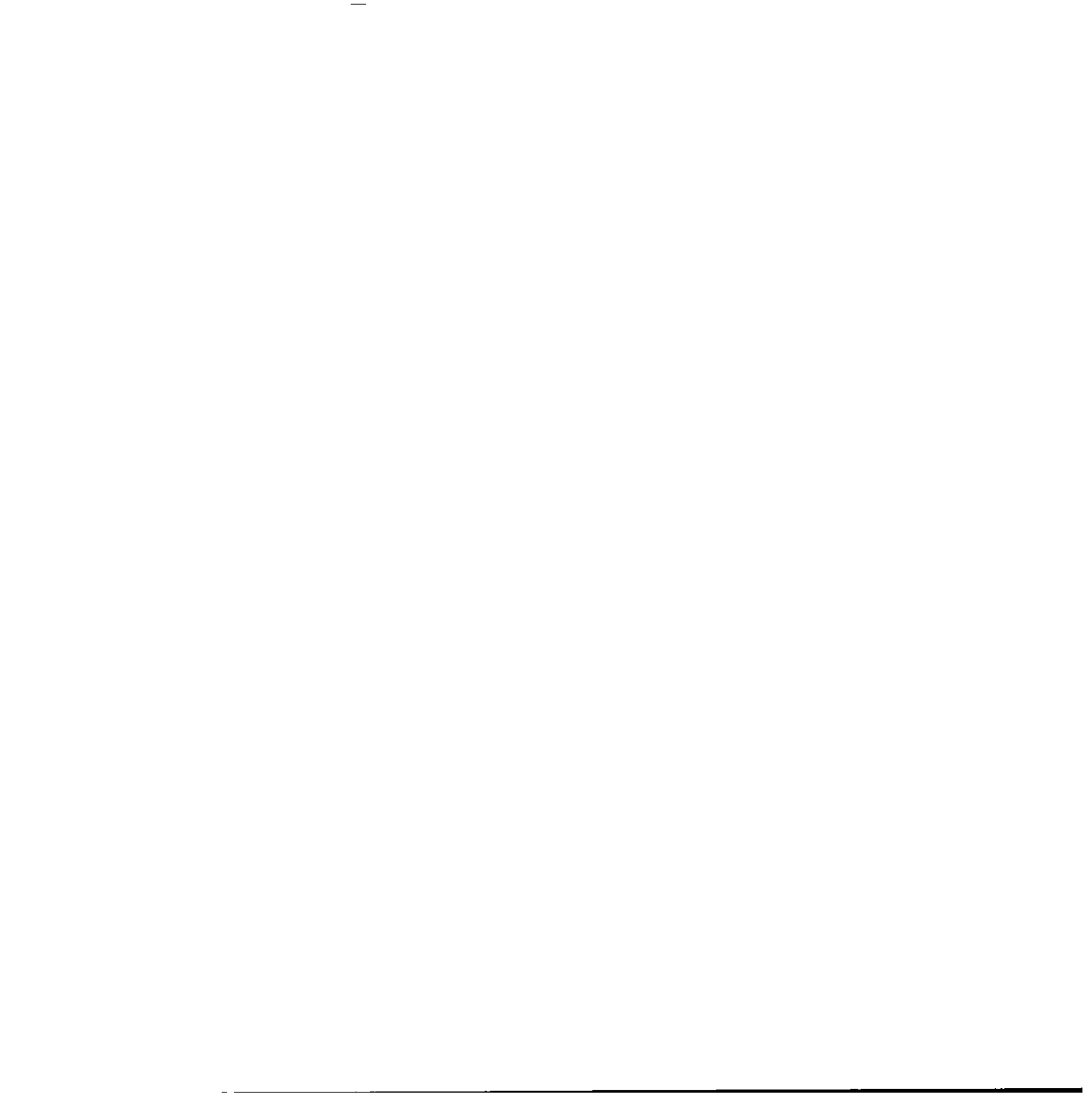
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AMERICAN C
TRUSTEES AN



James Madison 1822

earned Institutions ought to be favorite objects with every free people. They throw that light over the public mind which is the best security against crafty & dangerous encroachments on the public liberty. ...

What spectacle can be more edifying or more seasonable, than that of Liberty & Learning, each leaning on the other for their mutual & best support?



National Perspectives on Historical Illiteracy
ACTA, Losing America's Memory (February 2000)

Survey of 556 college seniors at the "Top 25" National Universities and the "Top 25" National Liberal Arts Colleges.

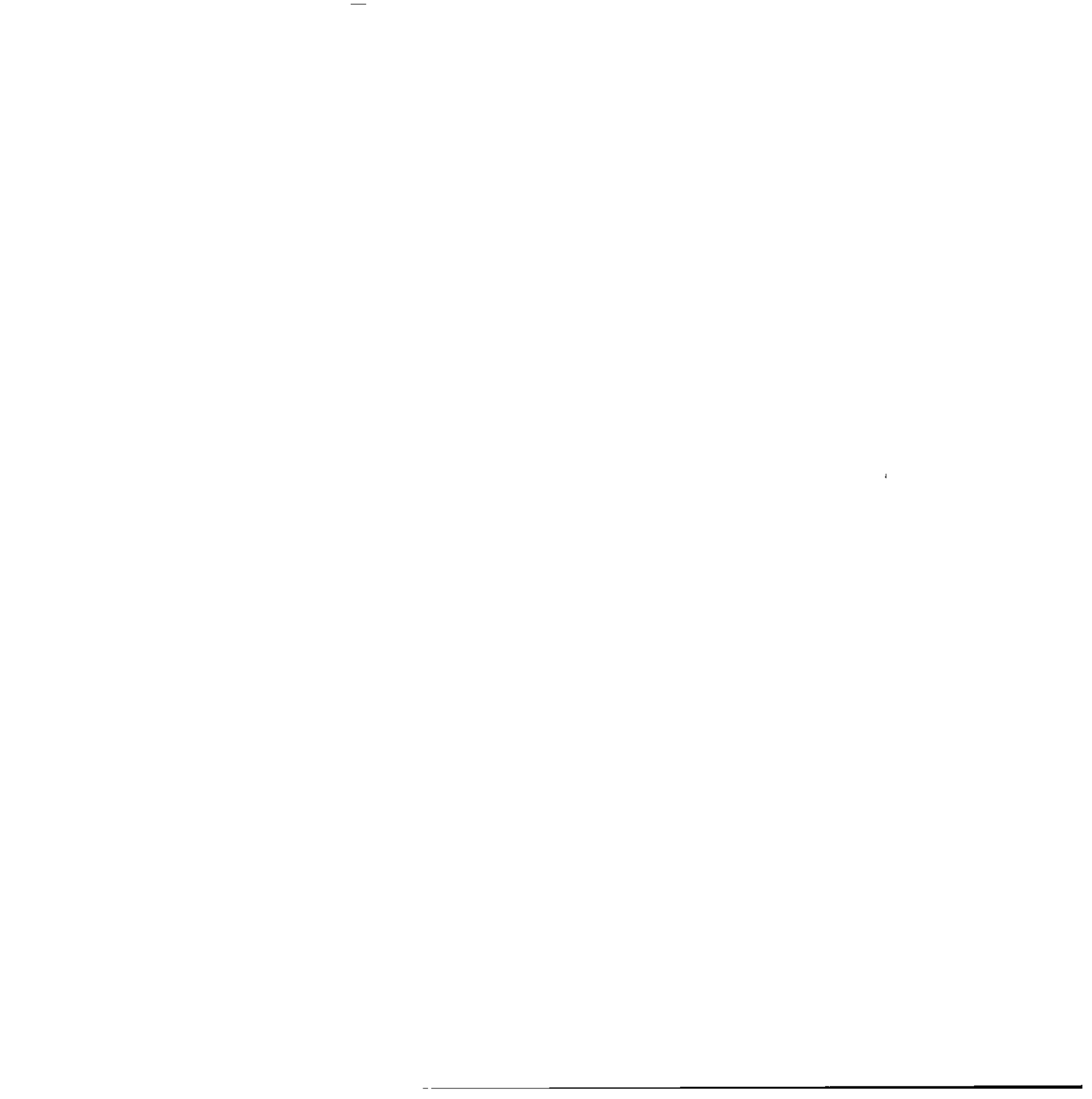
Beavis and Butthead	99% identified correctly
Snoop Doggy Dog	98% identified correctly
George Washington as general at Yorktown	34% identified correctly
James Madison as Father of the Constitution	23% identified correctly
Abraham Lincoln as author of the words: 'Government of the people, by the people, for the people'	22% identified correctly

—

It Gets Worse

ts of a 2012 survey of recent college graduates
(Custom Research North America)

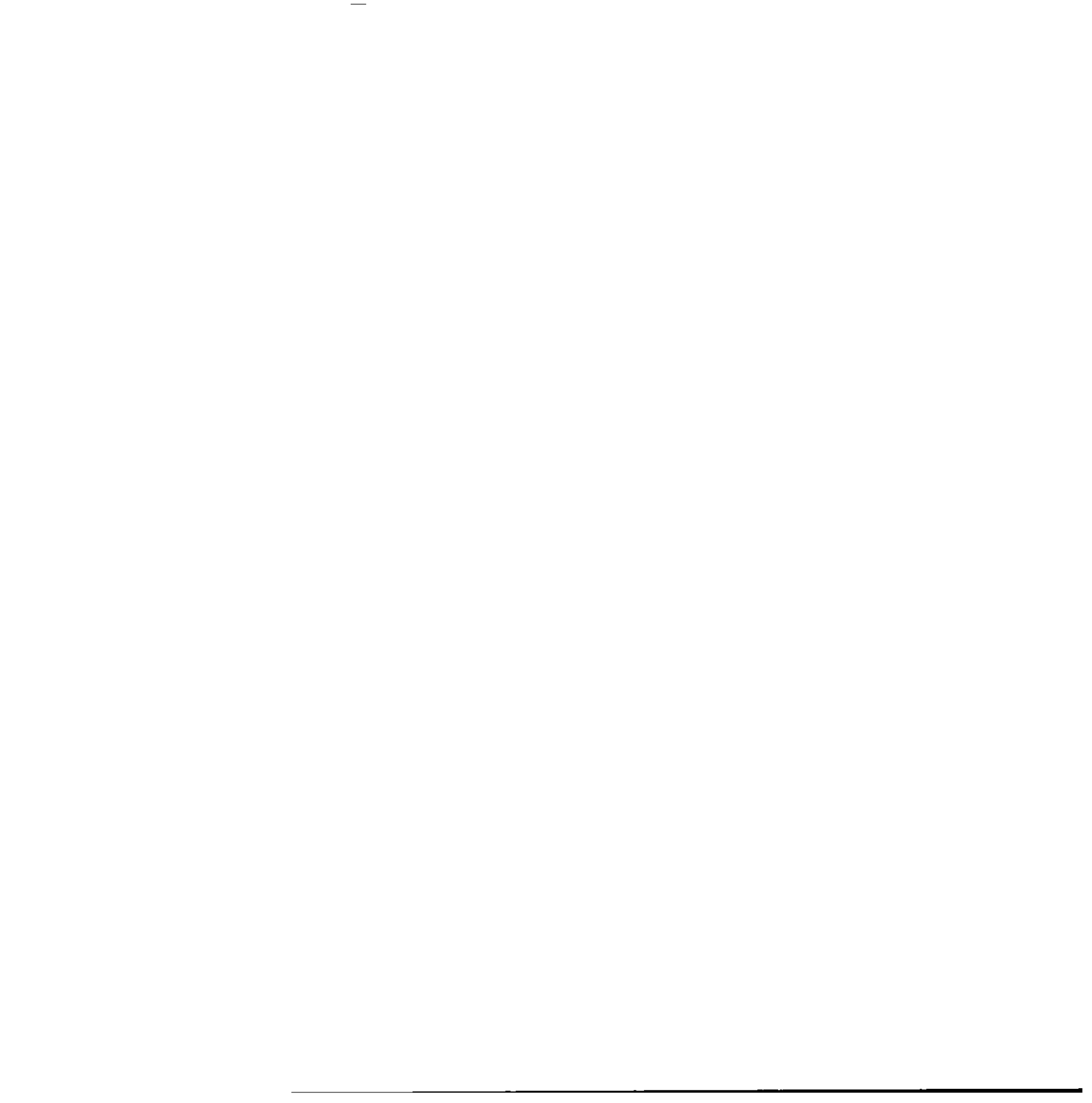
Long Are Terms for Members of Congress?	38.4% identified corre
is Lady Gaga?	96.2% identified corre



Cause and Effect ...

**ACTA'S Study of the Core Curriculum:
What Will They Learn? TM**

32% of four-year colleges and universities do not require foundational study of American history or government





CELEBRATING **20** YEARS
PROMOTING ACADEMIC FREEDOM & EXCELLENCE

To be ignorant of history, wrote Cicero, is to be a child forever. Centuries later, Thomas Jefferson admonished our young republic that freedom and ignorance can never exist together.

American higher education has generally abandoned its obligation to prepare graduates who have the knowledge and understanding to take up meaningful roles in our free society. ACTA is working hard to change that.

WHAT WE ARE DOING

Understanding the Problem

Our first task is to help the American public and higher education trustees and policymakers understand the extent of the problem. In 1999 ACTA commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut to survey seniors at the nation's 55 most prestigious colleges and universities to see if they could answer basic questions on the nation's history. These questions were typical of a standard high school curriculum, many of them replicating questions from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The shocking results—81% of these seniors from elite institutions received the equivalent of a “D” or “F”—would soon reverberate through the U.S. Capitol itself.

"History is a discipline in decline. There is a profound ignorance not only among students but among their teachers as well. This study confirms that."

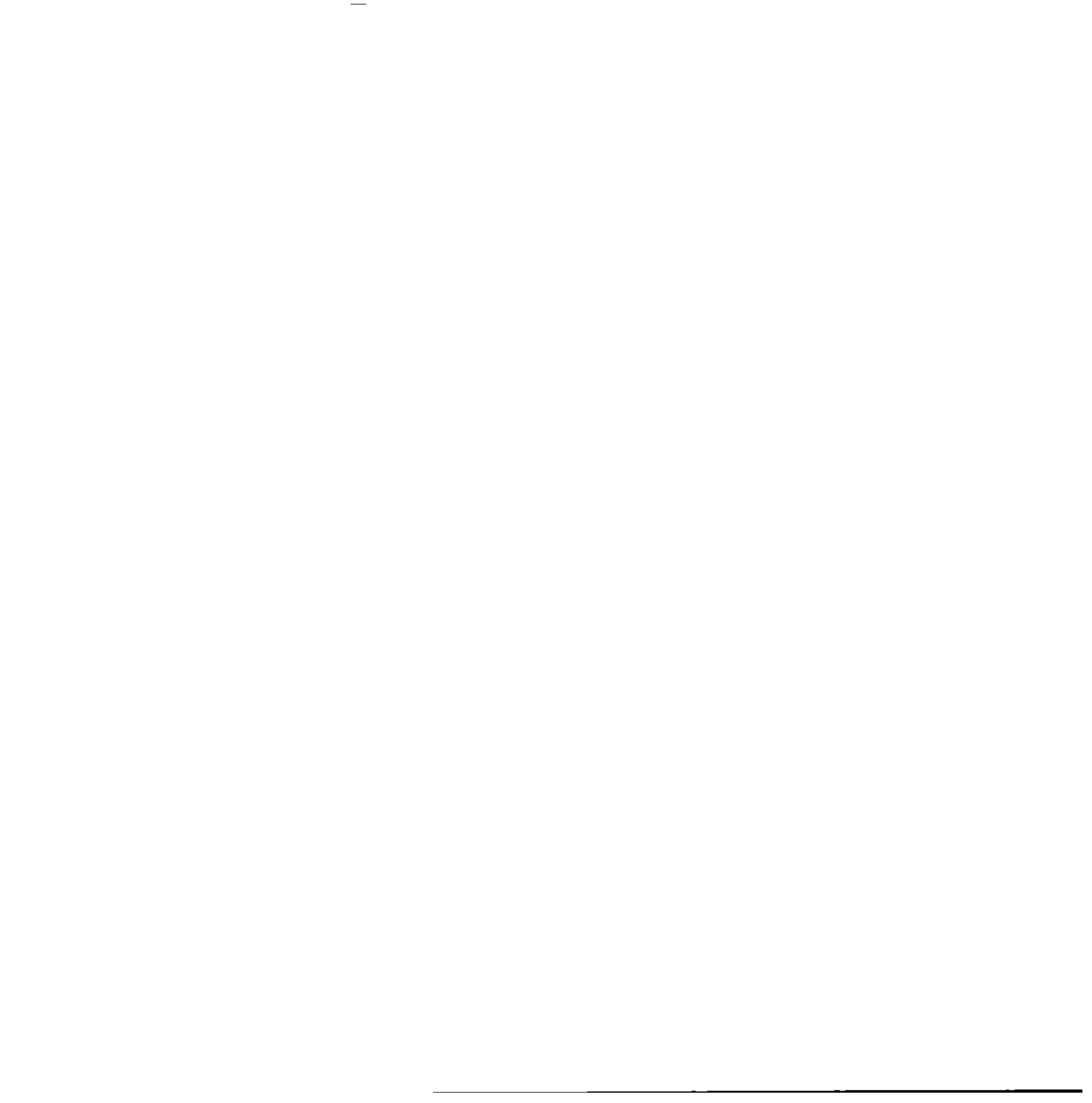
— **Oscar Handlin, University Professor Emeritus at Harvard University**

On President's Day, February 21, 2000, ACTA reported the findings in its report, *Losing America's Memory. Historical Illiteracy in the 21st Century*," with the endorsement of historian David McCullough. Congress moved quickly. On June 30 of that year, Concurrent Resolution 129, introduced by Senator Joseph Lieberman on behalf of Senators Gorton, Smith, Cleland, Byrd, Conrad, Bennett, and Grams, and unanimously adopted, took note of ACTA's survey. The Concurrent Resolution called for boards of trustees and college administrators, as well as state officials responsible for public higher education, to review their standards and add requirements for the study of United States history.

ACTA continues to monitor the state of historical knowledge among college students. The What Will They Learn?™ project takes note of which schools require American history or government and which do not. In 2012, we commissioned Gfk Roper OmniTel to survey college graduates again. Unfortunately, the findings were as dismal as the initial survey. Only 17% of college graduates could identify Lincoln's Gettysburg Address as the source of the phrase, "Government of the people, by the people, for the people." Only 20% could identify James Madison as the "Father of the Constitution." Nearly two-thirds were unaware that the term of a U.S. Senator is six years, and 43% could not even identify the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Engaging the Public, Trustees, and Policymakers

In 2012, ACTA testified before the U.S. Congress, endorsing the restoration of a day of commemoration on George Washington's actual birthday. In 2008, ACTA coordinated the publication and release of *E Pluribus Unum*, a report by The Bradley Project designed to start a conversation about America's National Identity. The product of a two-year study involving a number of our nation's leading academics, public figures, journalists, educators and policy experts, it has attracted hundreds of thousands of viewers to its website. In 2003, with support from the Daniels Foundation, ACTA quickly responded to a call from civic leaders and scholars at the White House Forum on American History, Civics, and Service and issued *We the People, A Resource Guide to Promoting Historical Literacy for Governors, Legislators, Teachers, and Citizens*. Through op-eds and newspaper opinion pieces, ACTA reminds the public of all that our nation loses if it forgets its past. We are in constant contact with trustees, making them aware of the need to ensure a general education requirement for all students that ensures their basic understanding of this nation and its free institutions. And little by little, colleges and universities are rising to the challenge.





CELEBRATING **20** YEARS

PROMOTING ACADEMIC FREEDOM & EXCELLENCE

Americans' Limited Knowledge of the Roosevelts Shows Need for Colleges to Restore American History

39% of Americans Don't Know Franklin D. Roosevelt was President During World War II

September 17, 2014

Only 18% of Colleges Require Even a Single Course in American History or Government

WASHINGTON, DC—As Ken Burns' documentary "The Roosevelts: An Intimate History" airs this week, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni today released a survey that shows how little Americans know about Theodore and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

According to the study, 39% of Americans don't know Franklin D. Roosevelt was president during World War II; 59% don't know Theodore Roosevelt had a role in the construction of the Panama Canal. College graduates didn't do much better on the survey. Nearly half didn't know Teddy Roosevelt had a major role in the Panama Canal; one-third didn't know FDR spearheaded the New Deal and almost three in five didn't know he was elected four times. Examine the full survey here.

The survey underscores a problem of historical amnesia made worse by the weak curriculum of many American colleges and universities. According to the *What Will They Learn?*TM study, only 18% of institutions require students to take a course in American history or government.

This survey is the latest in a series conducted by GfK Custom Research. Previous studies have included a 2014 survey on D-Day that found that a quarter of Americans don't know D-Day occurred during World War II, and a 2012 survey that found only 57% of college graduates know John Roberts is the chief justice of the United States.

CONTACT:

Daniel Burnett

Director of Communications

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DBurnett@goacta.org



JOE FOSS INSTI



CIVICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know

Restoring civics education and
ensuring that all High School graduates
are ready for active, engaged citizenship.

The Goal: Preparing for Active & Engaged Citizenship

The Strategy: The Civics Education Initiative



CIVICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know

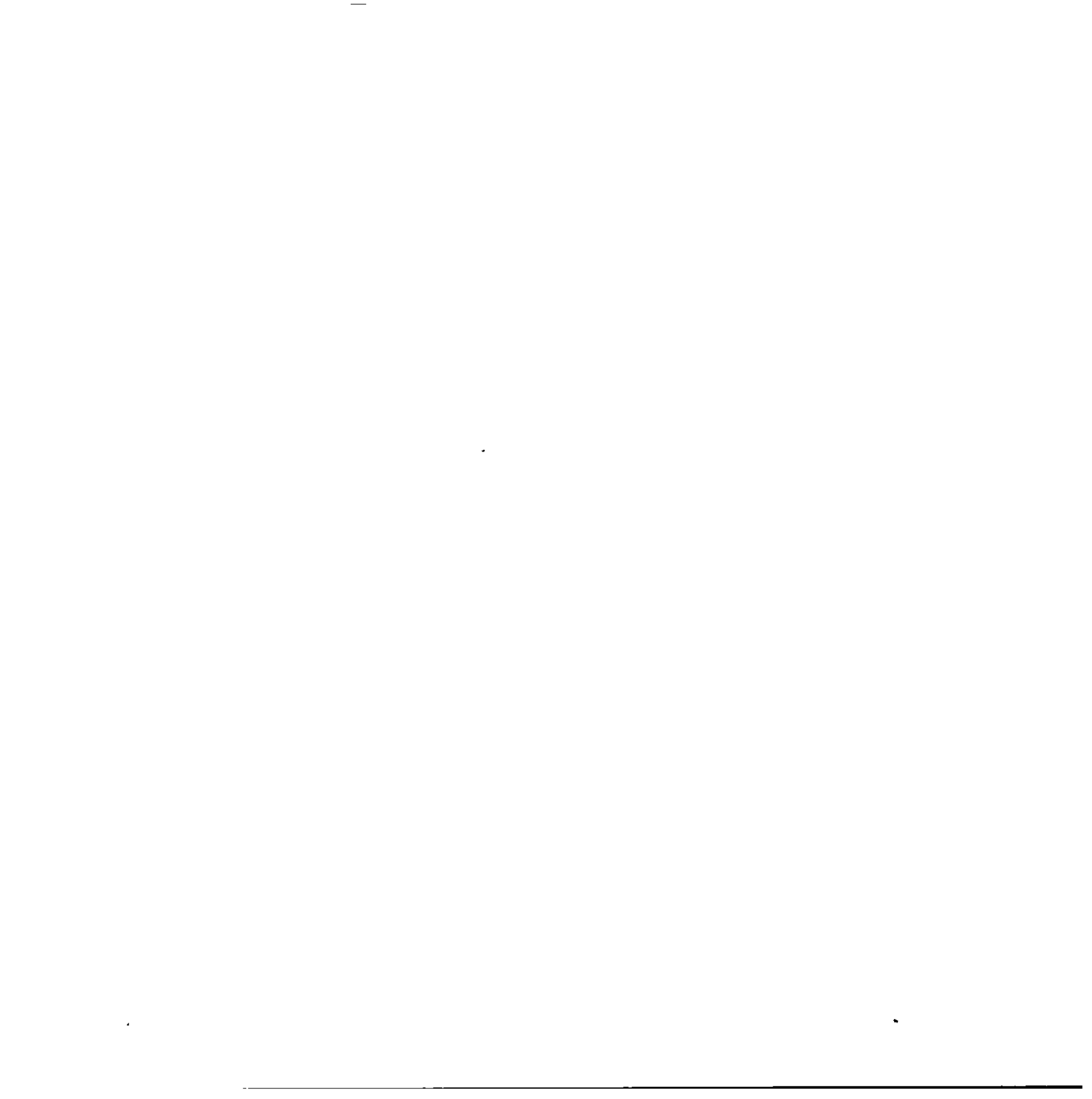
Joe Foss Institute was established:

- To educate our youth on the importance of America's unique freedoms, and
- To inspire them to public service.

Civics Education Initiative is a project of the Joe Foss Institute, with the goal of passing legislation in all 50 states by September 17, 2017 – the 230th anniversary of the Constitution.

Civics Education Initiative is simple in concept. It requires high school students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on 100 basic facts of US history and civics. This is the United States Citizenship Civics Test – *the test all new US citizens must pass.*

Civics Education Initiative is a first step to ensure all students are taught basic facts about how our government works, and who we are as a nation...things every student should know to be ready for active, engaged citizenship.



Nationwide Voter Survey

Polling Methodology



Joe Foss Institute commissioned a nationwide survey conducted by Wilson Pe Opinion Research (WPA)

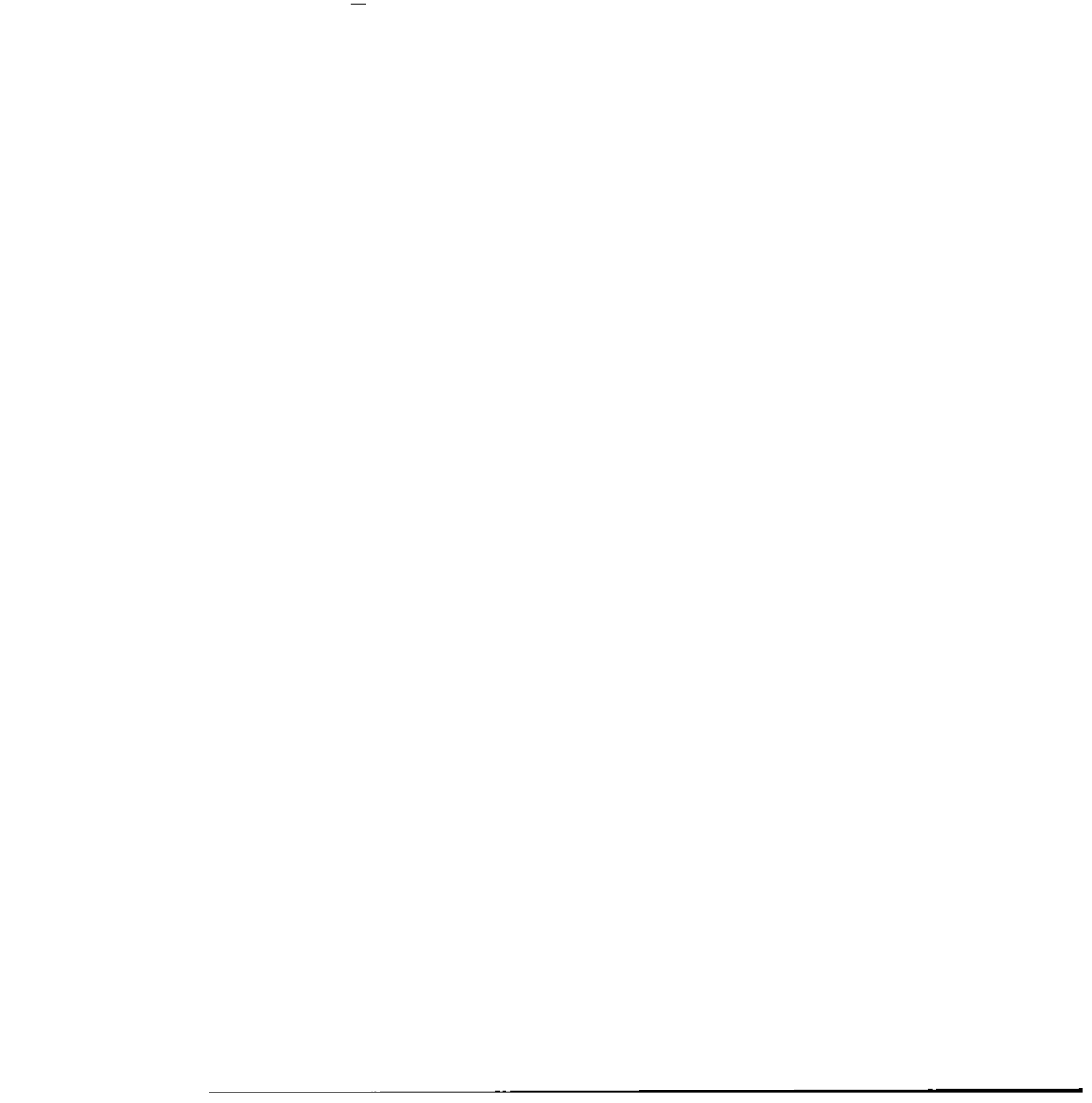
- Fielded April 22-24, 2014
- N= 804 Likely Voters
- MoE=+/- 3.5% in 95 out of 100 cases.

selected a random sample of likely voters nationwide using Random Digit Dialing. The sample for this survey was stratified based on geography, age, gender, ethnicity, and education.

The exact language for the two questions highlighted in this presentation were:

“Some have proposed that high school students must pass a civics test in order to graduate. Would you vote yes or no on an initiative to require high school students to pass the same civics exam that all immigrants must pass to become US citizens in order to graduate?”

“If you knew that a legislator from your state supported a proposal like this, would you be more likely or less likely to vote for them?”

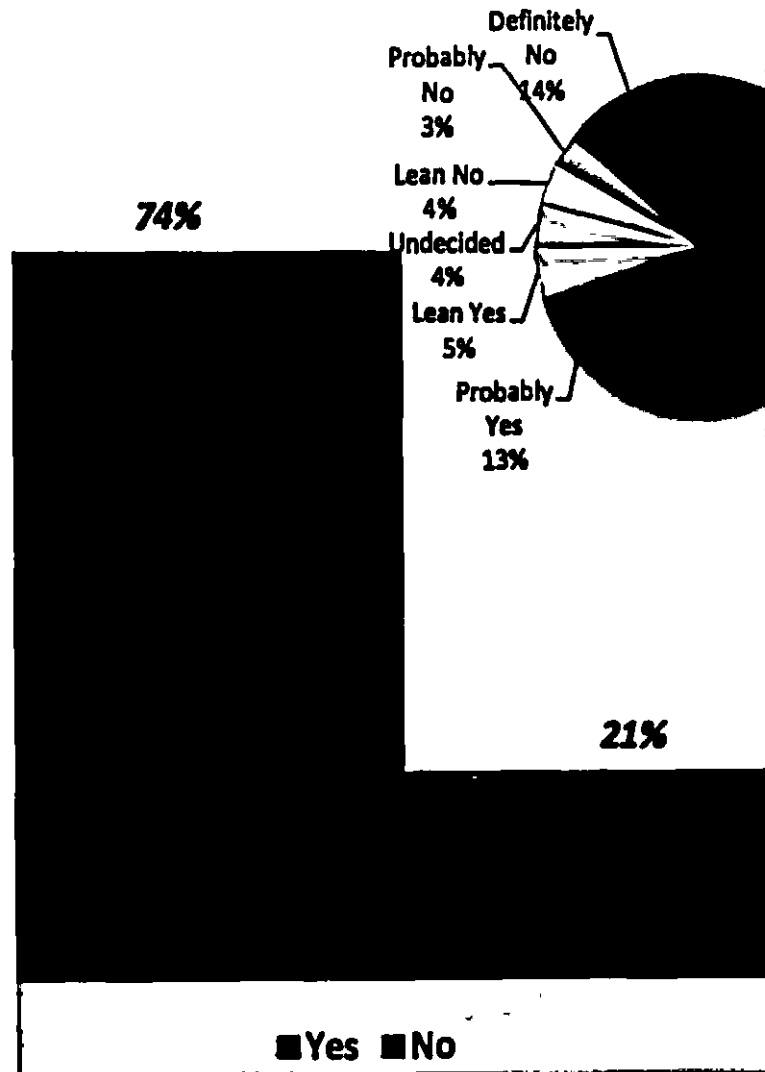


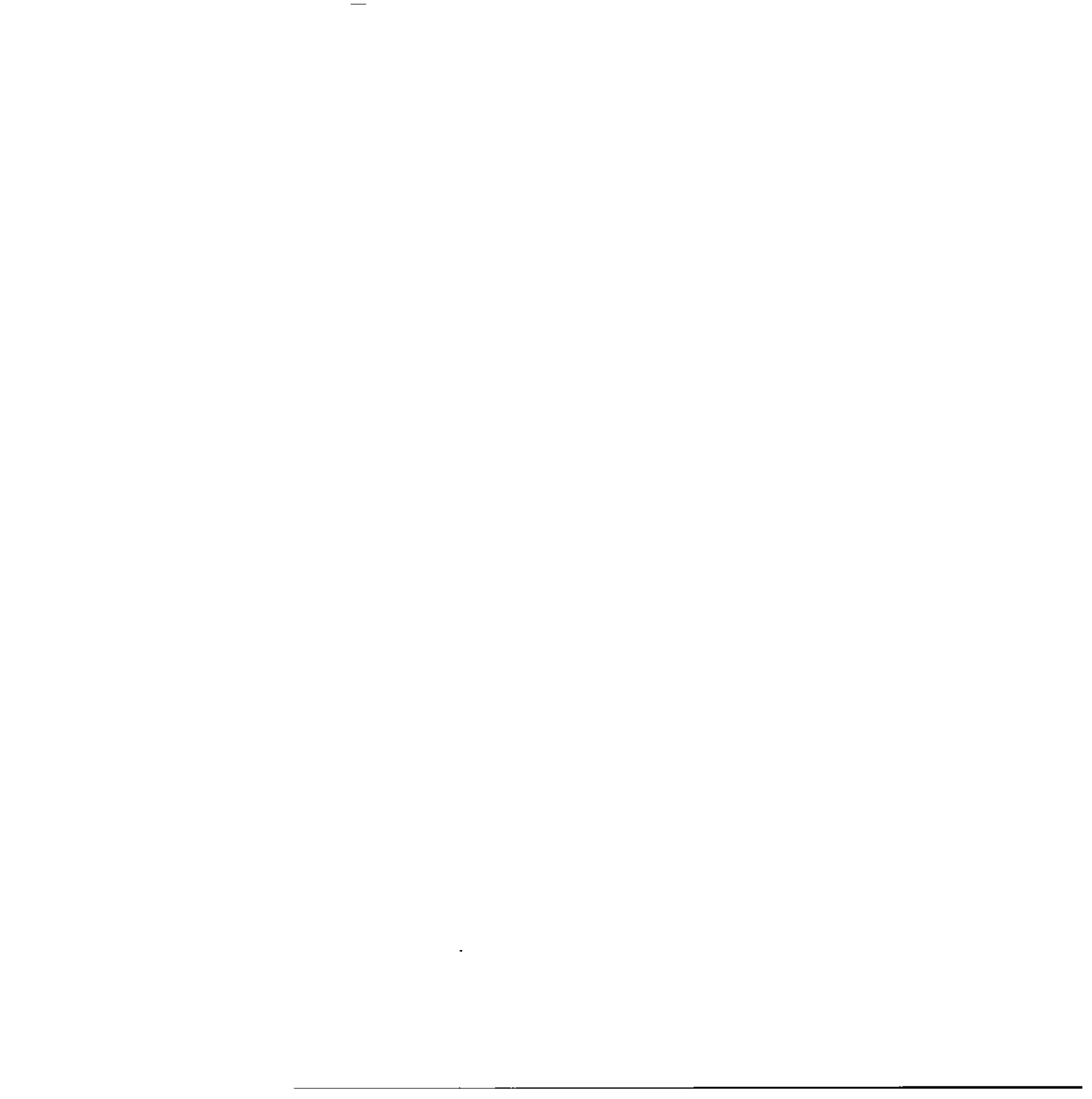
The Civics Education Initiative

Overwhelmingly Supported by Voters

74% of voters support the Civics Education Initiative. Every demographic tested shows support at or above 57% with 57% of all voters saying "Definitely Yes." Yes/No differential is +53!

	YES	NO	Diff
	74%	21%	+53
	78%	19%	+59
Democrat	71%	24%	+47
Republican	84%	13%	+71
Independent	75%	21%	+54
White	68%	27%	+41
Black	81%	16%	+65
Hispanic	69%	25%	+44
Male	76%	20%	+56
Female	76%	22%	+54
White American	60%	32%	+28
Black American	81%	14%	+67
Hispanic American	73%	22%	+51
West	74%	22%	+52
East	68%	28%	+40



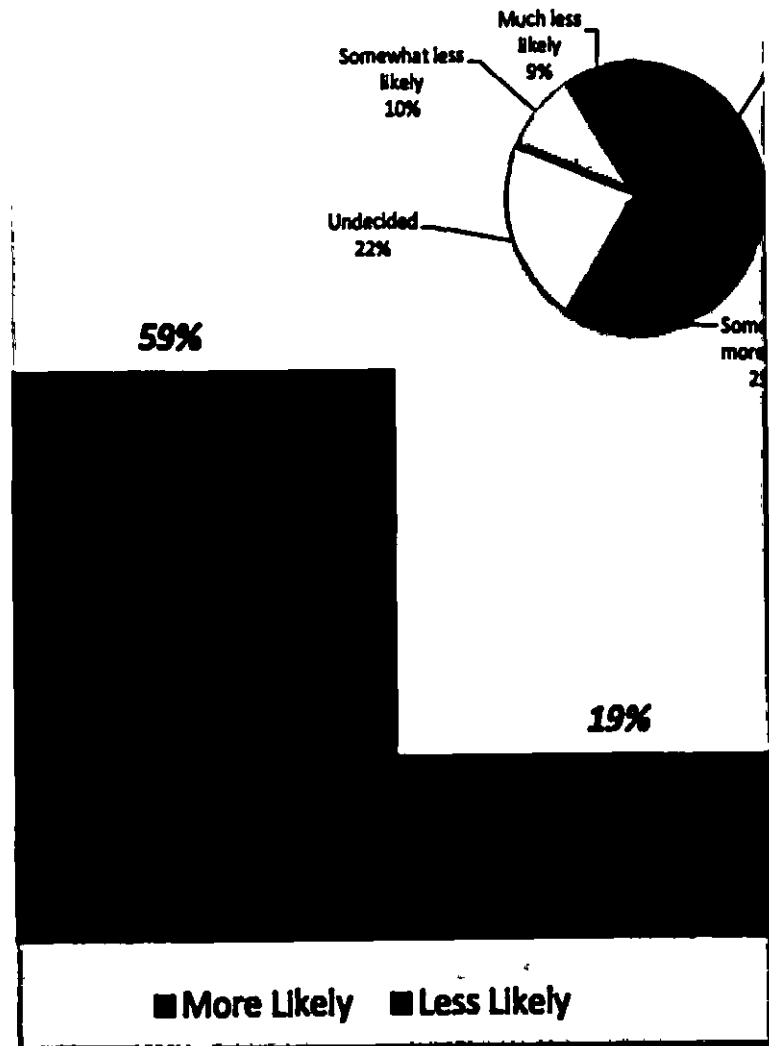


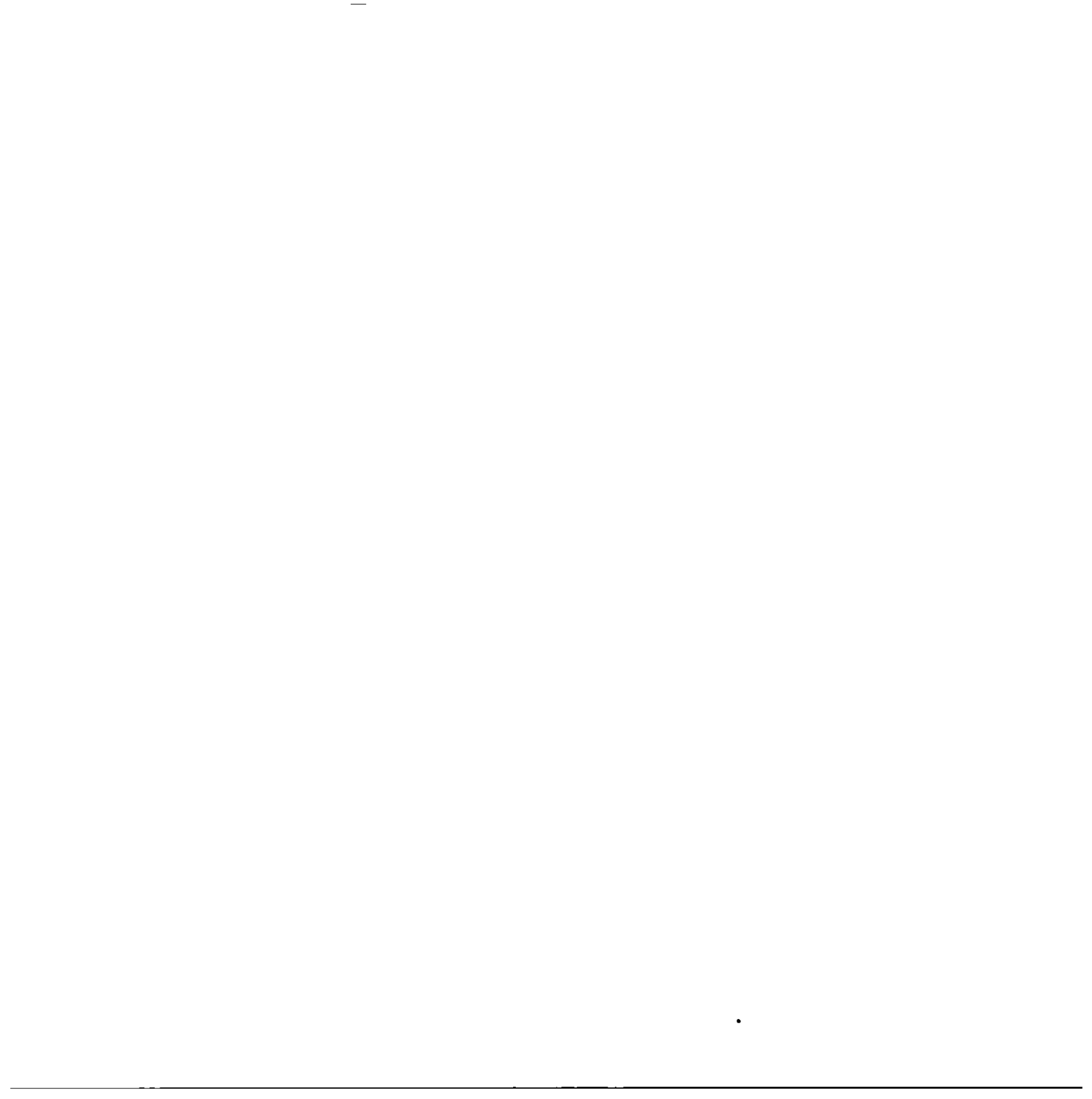
The Civics Education Initiative

ers Much More Likely to Vote for Supportive Legis

are overwhelmingly much more
o support a Legislator that backs the
Education Initiative. Overall, the
rt/oppose factor is nearly 4-to-1.

	More Likely	Less Likely	Diff
	60%	16%	+44
	62%	15%	+47
n	59%	18%	+41
ican	71%	8%	+63
ndent	62%	17%	+45
rat	53%	21%	+32
y Voters	68%	12%	+56
Voters	55%	19%	+36
	64%	15%	+49
ic	57%	16%	+41
American	49%	28%	+21
	60%	12%	+48
	64%	17%	+47
st	57%	17%	+40
East	59%	19%	+40





The Civics Education Initiative

Targeting 15 States, with a Goal of Passage in 10 in 2015

2015: Goal is passage in all 50 States by November 17, 2017 – the 230th Anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

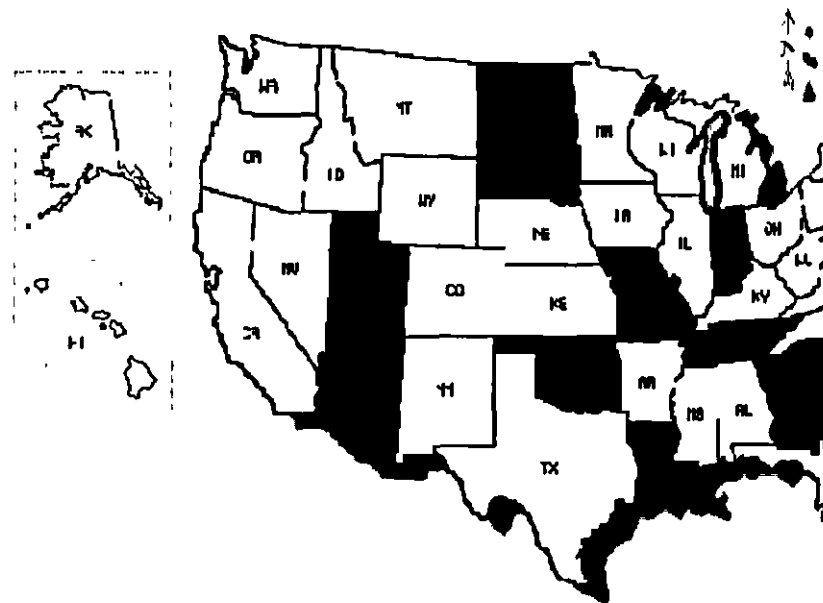
2015: Target 15 states with goal of passage in 10 states by legislative enactment.

2016: Target 25 states with goal of passage in 20 states, including passage at the ballot box in at least one state, by initiative or legislative referral.

2017: Target the remaining states for legislative enactment.

Civics Education Initiative 2015

- - Go 15:
- - Good 10:
- - Search 10:





JOE FOSS INSTITUTE



CIVICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know

8925 E. Pima Center Parkway, Suite 100 Scottsdale, AZ 85258 887.Joe.Foss

(563.3677) 480.348.0316

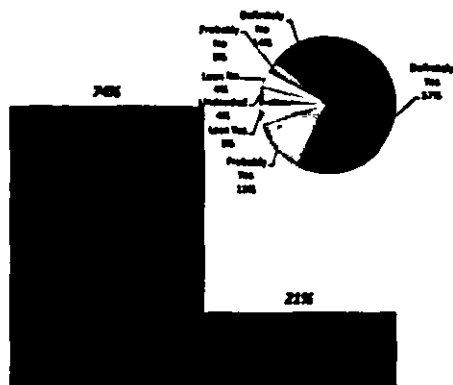
Frank Riggs, President & CEO

Sam Stone, Executive Director

Restoring civics education and ensuring that all High School graduates are ready for active, engaged citizenship.

The Civics Education Initiative is simple in concept. It requires High School students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on 100 basic facts of U.S. history and civics taken from the United States Citizenship Civics Test – *the test all immigrants applying for U.S. citizenship must pass.* Yet, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 24 percent of U.S. high school students are proficient in civics, and studies by the Annenberg Foundation show that a third of U.S. citizens can't name even one branch of our federal government. That's why the **Joe Foss Institute** created **The Civics Education Initiative**.

The Civics Education Initiative legislation allows individual schools to administer the test in a way the school deems as adequate to ensure the requirements are followed. Students may take the test any time during their high school careers and may take the test as many times as necessary to pass. By using this well---established test and the study materials that are already easily available online and for free, CEI legislation has next to no implementation costs.



Overall, 74% of voters support the **Civics Education Initiative**. Every demographic group tested shows support at or above 60%, with 57% of all voters saying "Definitely Yes!"

	YES	NO	+/- Difference
All	74%	21%	+53
Men	78%	19%	+59
Women	71%	24%	+47
Republican	84%	13%	+71
Independent	75%	21%	+54
Democrat	68%	27%	+41
White	76%	20%	+56
Hispanle	76%	22%	+54
African American	60%	32%	+28

The Civics Education Initiative is a first step to ensure all students are taught basic civics about how our government works, and who we are as a nation...things every student should know to be ready for active, engaged citizenship.



The Civics Education Initiative National Board of Advisors includes former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Pulitzer winning journalist Carl Bernstein and award winning actor Joe Mantegna.

The Civics Education Initiative is a project of the Joe Foss Institute, with the goal of passing legislation in all 50 states by September 17, 2017 – the 230th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

For further information please contact:

Executive Director Sam Stone at 480-745-8237 or Sam@CivicsEducationInitiative.com



Q. What problem is addressed by the Civics Education Initiative?

A. *Too few citizens know and understand basic American civics - how our government works and who we are as a nation. By example, according to the Pew Research Center, only about one-third of Americans can name the three branches of government, much less say what each does.*

Q. What is the impact of this lack of civics knowledge?

A. *If you don't know how our government works, you're not likely to be an active and engaged citizen. It's no wonder so few citizens vote, given this lack of basic civics knowledge.*

Q. Why isn't civics being better taught in our schools today?

A. *Education funding is increasingly tied to high-stakes testing on reading, math and science, with a particular focus on STEM subjects - science, technology, engineering, math. While important, this emphasis is leaving civics as a secondary subject or in some cases, not being taught all together.*

Q. How does the Civics Education Initiative address this problem?

A. *The Civics Education Initiative is simple in concept. It requires High School students, as a condition for graduation, to pass a test on 100 basic facts of US history and civics taken from the United States Citizenship Civics Test - the test all immigrants applying for US citizenship must pass.*

Q. How do immigrants taking the test compare to our own High School students?

A. *According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), 92% of immigrants who take the required civics test for citizenship pass. Yet studies by the Annenberg Foundation show that a third of all U.S. citizens can't name even one branch of our federal government.*

Q. Why use this specific USCIS US Citizenship Civics test?

A. *We already require by Federal law that new citizens must learn these 100 facts so they can be prepared to be active and engaged citizens. By using this well-established test, there is no cost to develop a new test, next to no cost involved to administer the test, and a myriad of study materials for this test already exist.*

Q. What does the Civics Education Initiative legislative language specifically say?

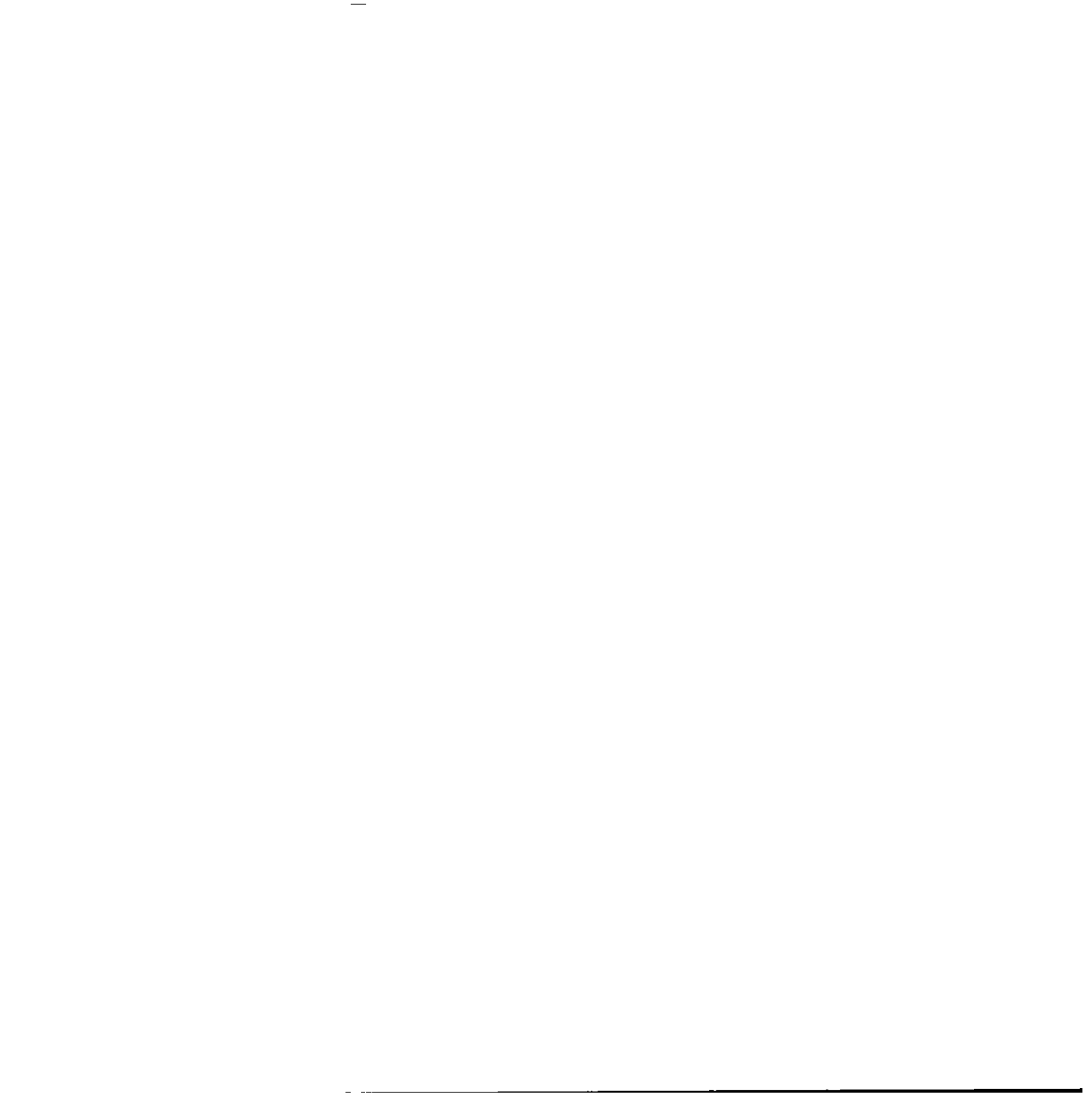
A. *All (State) High School students, attending any public or charter school, or a student seeking a general educational development (GED) equivalency, shall, as a condition of High School graduation or its equivalency, take and receive a passing grade on the United States Citizenship Civics Test, produced by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The test shall be the specific 100-questions used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and administered to all applicants for US citizenship. High School students shall be tested on all 100 questions, with a minimum score of 60% being required for passage. High School Students may take the test as many times as necessary for passage, but must pass the test prior to receiving a certificate of High School graduation or a GED equivalency. All (State) schools shall certify that a student has taken the test and received a passing grade on the test, in a way it deems as adequate to ensure the requirements of this Act are followed.*

Q. Is the Civics Education Initiative a popular idea?

A. *Overwhelmingly so! A recent national survey showed 74 percent of likely voters support or strongly support the Civics Education Initiative, including overwhelming support among Men - 78%, Women - 71%, Republicans - 84%, Independents - 75%, Democrats - 68%, Anglos - 76%, Hispanics - 76%, and African American - 60%.*

Q. Who is promoting the Civics Education Initiative effort?

A. *The Civics Initiative www.CivicsEducationInitiative.com is project of the Joe Foss Institute www.JoeFossInstitute.org as part of its continuing efforts to promote an appreciation for America's freedoms, public service, patriotism and integrity. The Civics Education Initiative National Board of Advisors Includes former US Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Pulitzer winning journalist Carl Bernstein and award winning actor Joe Mantegna.*



The Civics Proficiency Initiative will set as a requirement for High School graduation that students must pass the United States Citizenship Civics Test. Passage of this test – *in English* – is required for all new American Citizens. A score of 60% or greater is required for passage.

As of December 2013, 92% of immigrants applying for United States citizenship passed the test.

But a study conducted in Arizona by the Goldwater Institute showed only 4% of High School students passing the test. In Oklahoma, a study conducted by the Oklahoma Council for Public Affairs showed less than 3% of High School students passing the test.

Shouldn't our High School graduates know as much about basic American civics as we require immigrants applying for United States citizenship to know about America?

Can you pass the test?

Take the test below and see how well you know basic American civics.

United States Citizenship Civics Test

100 Questions in Three Parts

PART ONE: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

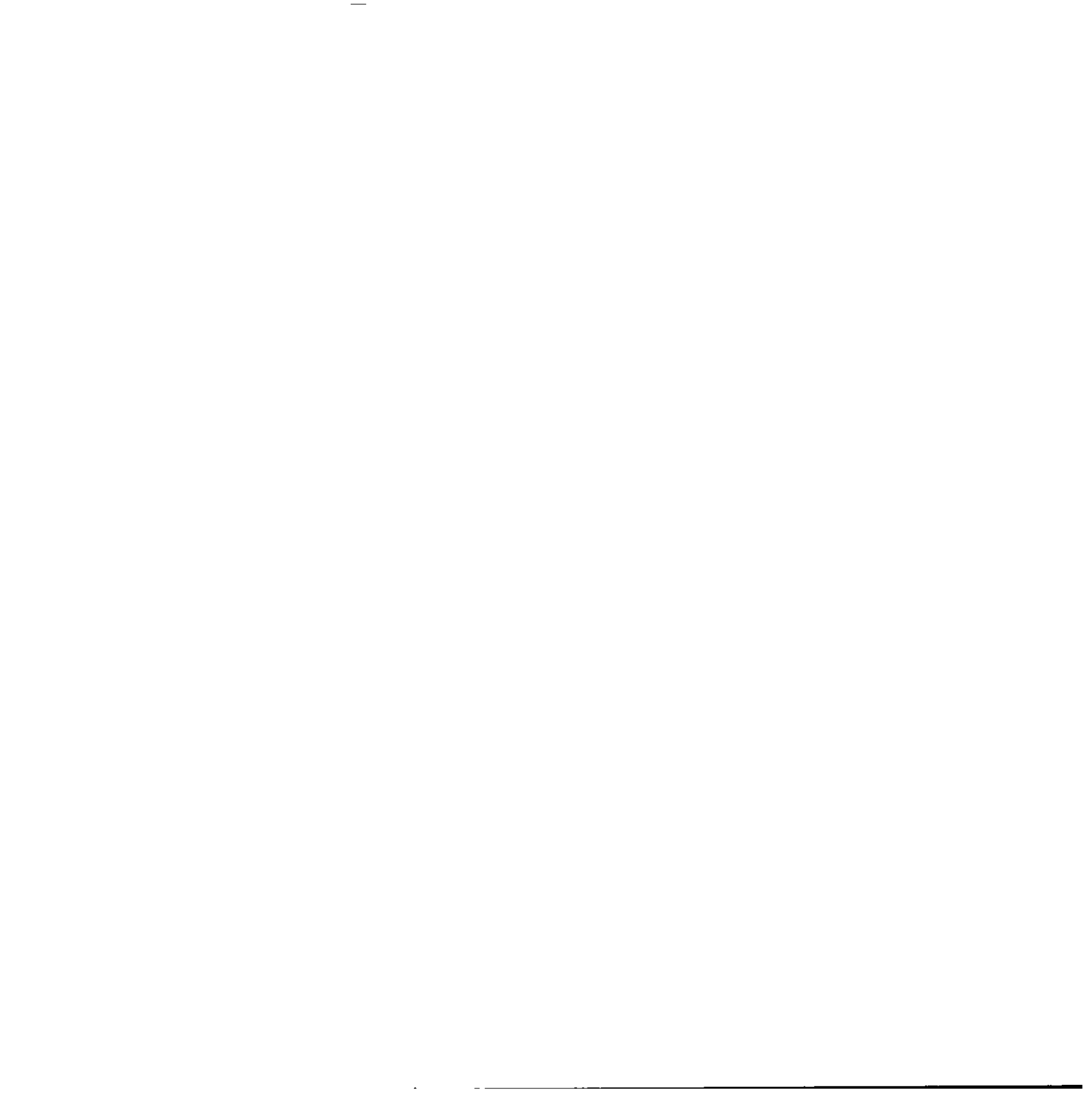
A: Principles of American Democracy

1. What is the supreme law of the land?
2. What does the Constitution do?
3. The Idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?
4. What is an amendment?
5. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?
6. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?
7. How many amendments does the Constitution have?
8. What did the Declaration of Independence do?
9. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?
10. What is freedom of religion?
11. What is the economic system in the United States?
12. What is the "rule of law"?

B: System of Government

13. Name one branch or part of the government.
14. What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?

18. How many U.S. Senators are there?
19. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?
20. Who is one of your state's U.S. Senators now?
21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?
23. Name your U.S. Representative.
24. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?
25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?
26. We elect a President for how many years?
27. In what month do we vote for President?
28. What is the name of the President of the United States now?
29. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now?
30. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
31. If both the President and the Vice President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
32. Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?
33. Who signs bills to become laws?
34. Who vetoes bills?
35. What does the President's Cabinet do?
36. What are two Cabinet-level positions?
37. What does the judicial branch do?
38. What is the highest court in the United States?
39. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?



- United States?
 46. What is the political party of the President now?
 47. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

C: Rights and Responsibilities

48. There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.
 49. What is one responsibility that is only for United States citizens?
 50. Name one right only for United States citizens.
 51. What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?
 52. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?
 53. What is one promise you make when you become a United States citizen?
 54. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?
 55. What are two ways that Americans can participate in their democracy?
 56. When is the last day you can send in federal income tax forms?
 57. When must all men register for the Selective Service?

PART TWO: AMERICAN HISTORY

A: Colonial Period and Independence

58. What is one reason colonists came to America?
 59. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?
 60. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?
 61. Why did the colonists fight the British?
 62. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?
 63. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
 64. There were 13 original states. Name three.
 65. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?
 66. When was the Constitution written?
 67. The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution. Name one of the writers.
 68. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?
 69. Who is the "Father of Our Country?"
 70. Who was the first President?

B. The 1800's

75. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?
 76. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?
 77. What did Susan B. Anthony do?

C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information

78. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.
 79. Who was President during World War I?
 80. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?
 81. Who did the United States fight in World War II?
 82. Before he was President, Eisenhower was a general. What war was he in?
 83. During the Cold War, what was the main concern of the United States?
 84. What movement tried to end racial discrimination?
 85. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?
 86. What major event happened on September 11, 2001, in the United States?
 87. Name one American Indian tribe in the United States.

PART THREE: INTEGRATED CIVICS

A: Geography

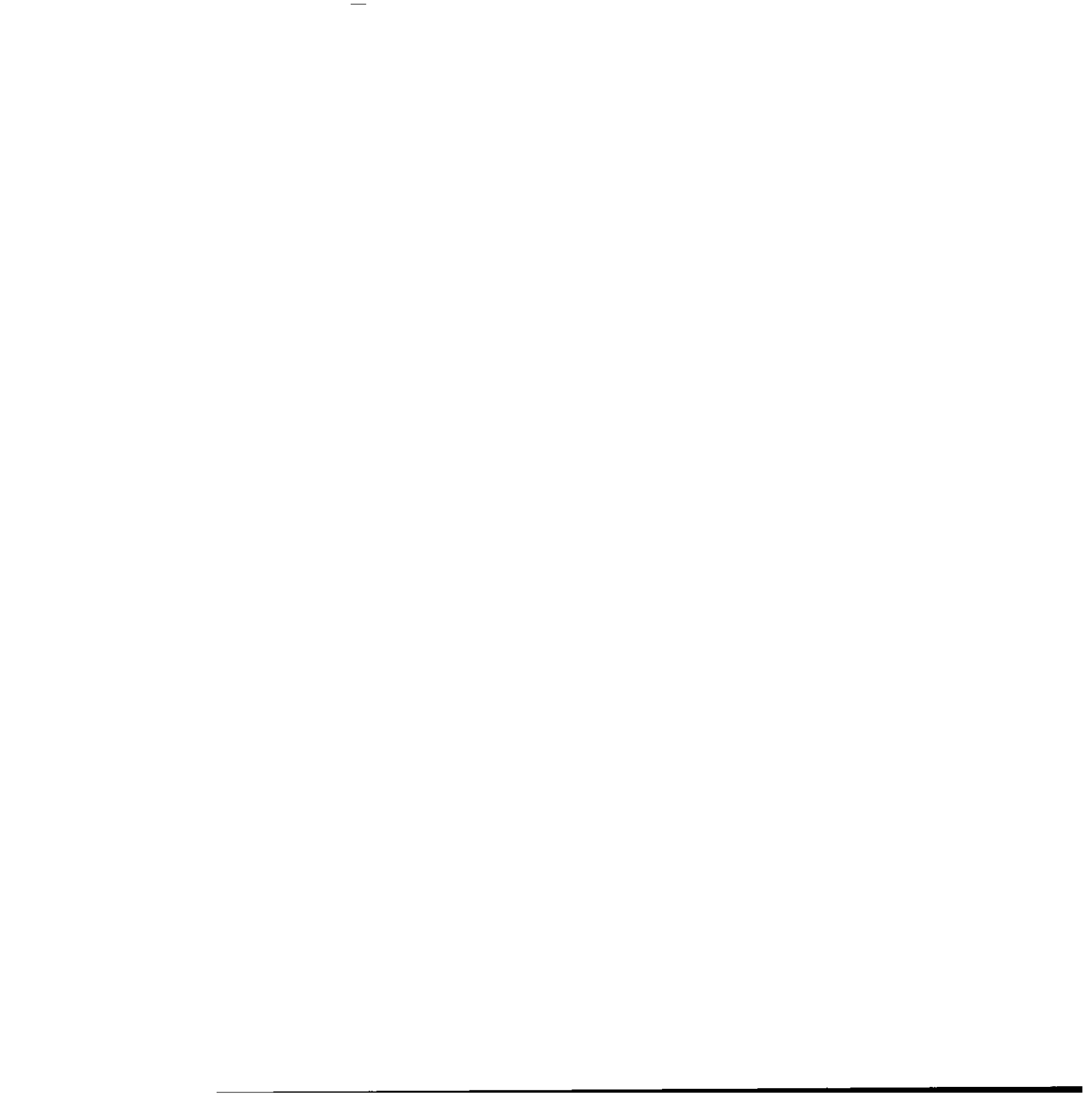
88. Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.
 89. What ocean is on the West Coast of the United States?
 90. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?
 91. Name one U.S. territory.
 92. Name one state that borders Canada.
 93. Name one state that borders Mexico.
 94. What is the capital of the United States?
 95. Where is the Statue of Liberty?

B: Symbols

96. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?
 97. Why does the flag have 50 stars?
 98. What is the name of the national anthem?

C: Holidays

99. When do we celebrate Independence Day?
 100. Name two national U.S. holidays.



Americans know surprisingly little about their government, survey finds

Wednesday, September 17th, 2014

PHILADELPHIA – Americans show great uncertainty when it comes to answering basic questions about how their government works, a national survey conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania has found.

The survey of 1,416 adults, released for Constitution Day (Sept. 17) in conjunction with the launch of the Civics Renewal Network, found that:

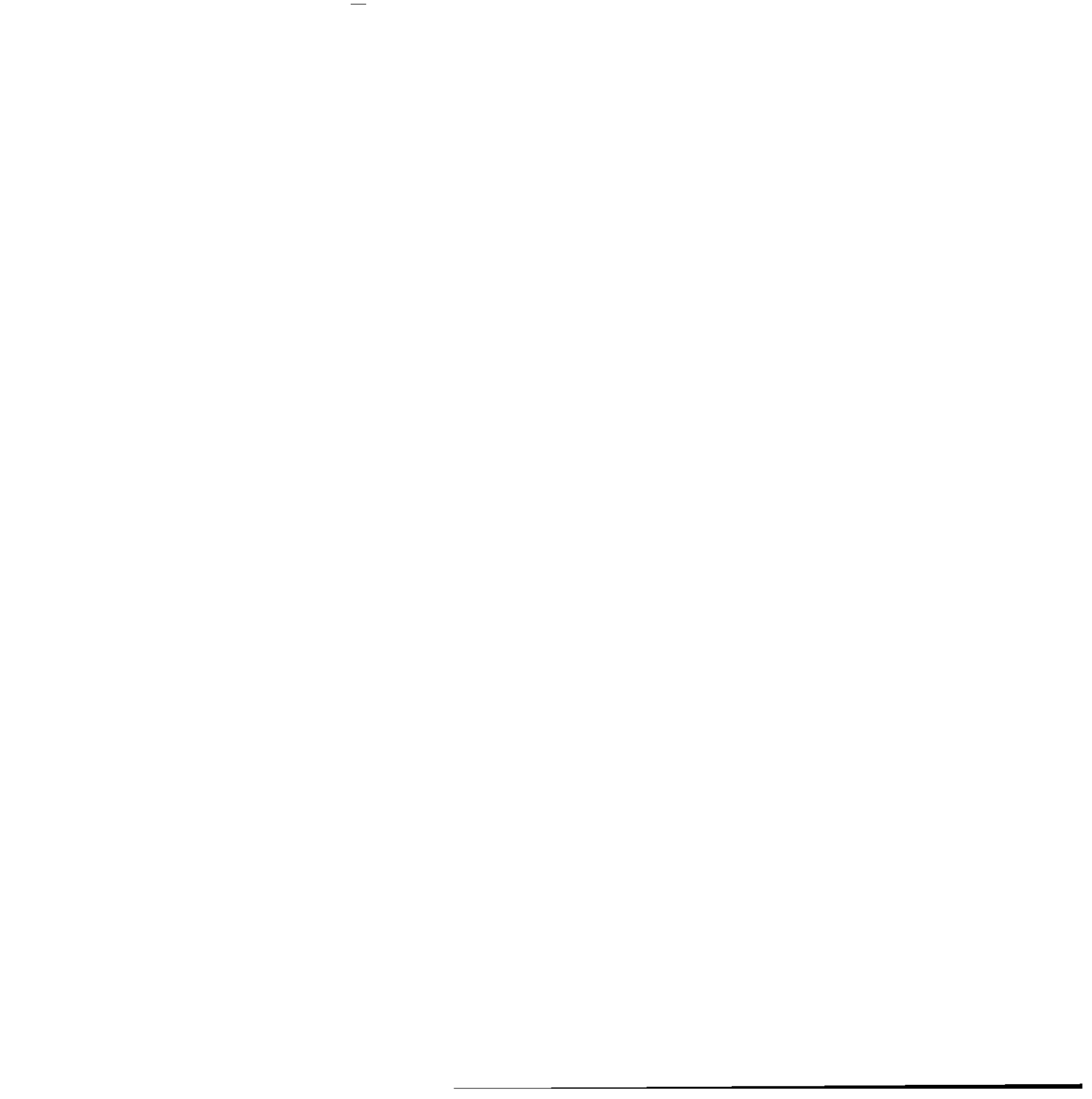
- While little more than a third of respondents (36 percent) could name all three branches of the U.S. government, just as many (35 percent) could not name a single one.
- Just over a quarter of Americans (27 percent) know it takes a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate to override a presidential veto.
- One in five Americans (21 percent) incorrectly thinks that a 5-4 Supreme Court decision is sent back to Congress for reconsideration.

“Although surveys reflect disapproval of the way Congress, the President and the Supreme Court are conducting their affairs, the Annenberg survey demonstrates that many know surprisingly little about these branches of government,” said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC). “This survey offers dramatic evidence of the need for more and better civics education.”

The Civics Renewal Network

To address the problem, APPC and 25 other nonpartisan organizations, including the Library of Congress, the National Constitution Center, the U.S. Courts, the National Archives, and the Newseum, announced the launch of the Civics Renewal Network, a unique partnership among some of the nation’s leaders in civics education. The network offers free, high-quality resources for teachers through the one-stop website www.civicsrenewalnetwork.org.

The Civics Renewal Network is celebrating Constitution Day with coast-to-coast activities and running public service ads in some major television markets encouraging viewers to learn about the Constitution. The ads can be seen on YouTube [here](#) and [here](#).



... of the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia and more than 550 schools nationwide will take the "Preamble Challenge," reciting the 52-word Preamble to the Constitution. An American Academy of Arts & Sciences symposium at the Newseum's Knight Conference Center in Washington, D.C., will examine the role of civics in American life, followed by a keynote address from new National Endowment for the Humanities chairman William "Bro" Adams. Those events will be video-streamed by the Academy here. The full day's schedule can be found on the APPC site here. A 10:30 a.m. news conference by the Civics Renewal Network also will be video-streamed on its site.

Most Americans do not know which parties control the House and Senate

The study also found that more than half of Americans do not know which party controls the House and Senate:

- Asked which party has the most members in the House of Representatives, 38 percent said they knew the Republicans are the majority, but 17 percent responded the Democrats, and 44 percent reported that they did not know (up from 27 percent who said they did not know in 2011).
- Asked which party controls the Senate, 38 percent correctly said the Democrats, 20 percent said the Republicans, and 42 percent said they did not know (also up from 27 percent who said they did not know in 2011).

For the complete release on the survey, [click here](#). For additional information on methodology and data, [click here](#).

Link: <http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/americans-know-surprisingly-little-about-their-government-survey-finds/>



How Informed Are American Citizens? -- What The Research Says --

Over the last ten years or so, numerous research studies and polls have produced very similar data about what Americans know about how government works, about the big issues of our time and the policies that address them, about where politicians stand on those issues and policies, and the historical knowledge needed to make wise judgments about these things. The results serve as indelible testimony to the depth of the civic and political literacy problem America faces.

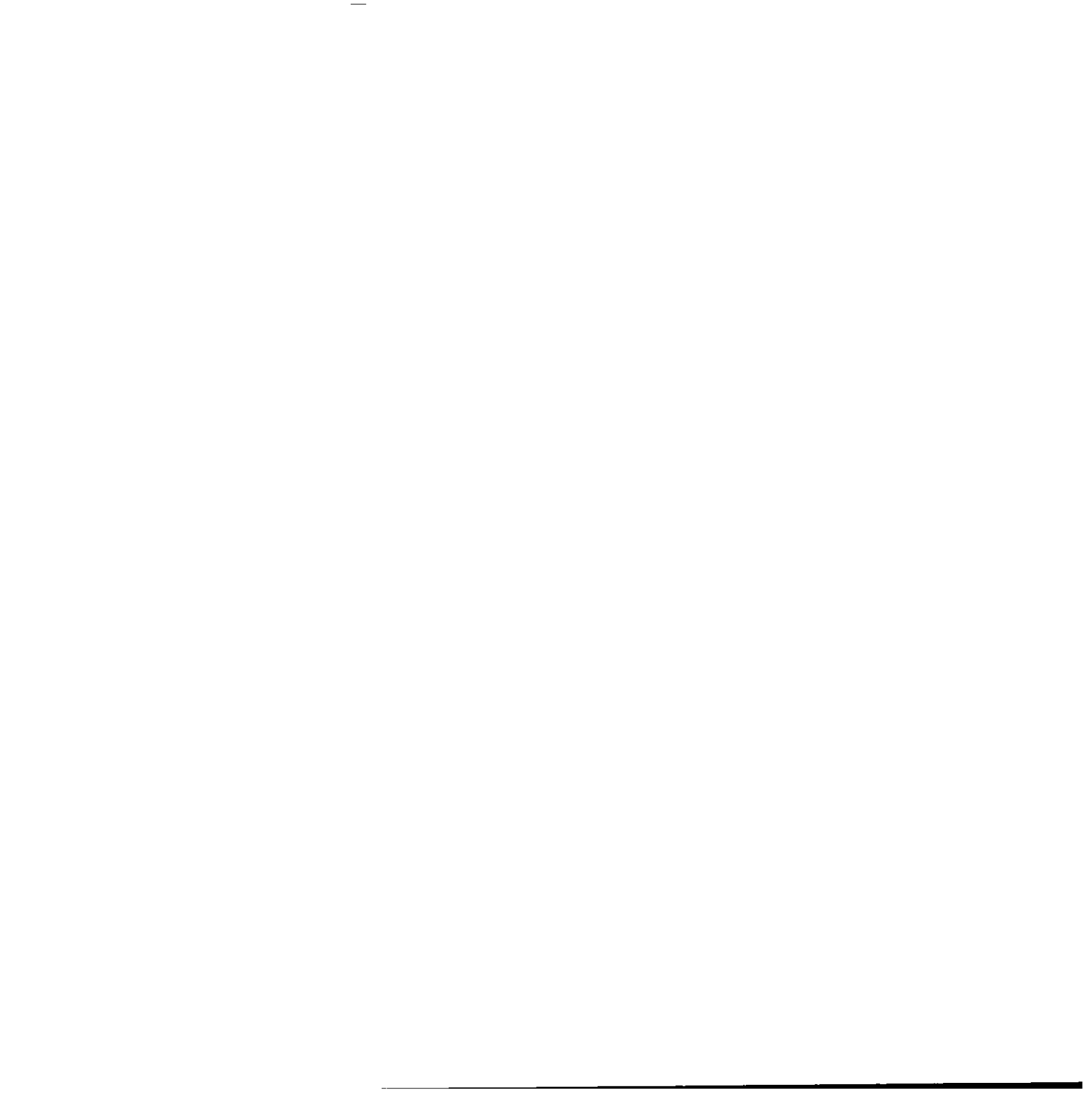
In 2005, the Knight Foundation commissioned one of the largest studies -- a two year, million dollar research project. Summing up the results, then president Hodding Carter III said: "These results are not only disturbing; they are dangerous."

"Americans Fail The Test Of Civic Literacy" screamed the headline of a 2008 report from the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. "It can truly be said we are suffering from an epidemic of civic ignorance," sums up Lt. General Josiah Bunting III, chairman of the group's National Civic Literacy Board. ISI is a conservative-leaning organization, but their study is comprehensive and objective. Regardless, the results are the same whether the source leans left, right, or otherwise.

Here are some bullet points from various studies in recent years. Links to the full reports are below.

- 64% of Americans can't name the three branches of government, or describe what they do.
- most of us don't know which party controls Congress at any given time.
- half can't describe the difference between liberals and conservatives
- most can't name their own members of Congress or their US Senators
- nearly half don't know that states have 2 Senators
- 54% cannot name a single Supreme Court Justice
- 41% cannot identify the Speaker of the House -- even in a multiple-choice question.
- only a bare majority can name even one basic purpose of the Constitution
- more citizens can name "American Idol" judges than can name the 1st Amendment rights
- 39% of us cannot name any of the freedoms in the 1st Amendment
- only one in 1000 can name all five rights in the 1st Amendment
- 35% feel the First Amendment goes too far. An additional 21% are unsure
- almost half think the president has the authority to suspend the U.S. Constitution
- 60% believe he can appoint judges to the federal courts without the approval of the Senate
- 50% feel newspapers should not be allowed to publish stories without government approval
- only 34% know that it's Congress that declares war
- only 35% know that Congress can override a presidential veto
- for those under age 40, the number rises to 54%

Report cards like these are just incredible in a nation that claims to value education so highly. And these are just civics-101 questions. It only gets worse when measuring knowledge levels about actual issues and public policies that affect not only the nation, but the quality of our own individual lives, and the lives of our families.



- nearly half can't name a renewable energy source
- 55% believe that the Constitution establishes a Christian nation
- 30% cannot identify the Holocaust
- only one in seven young people can find Iraq on a map
- as late as 2007, 41% still believed Saddam Hussein was directly involved in 9/11
- 62% believe that the making up of stories is a widespread problem in the news media

And in foreign affairs, our knowledge levels drop even further through the floor. The Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad found that "America's ignorance of the world is a national liability." Others consider it an outright national security threat.

The bottom line is the stark reality that the vast majority of Americans are willfully ignorant about the issues, policies, politicians, history, and structure of government needed for informed participation in democracy. And this is a problem that is even more critical today, when American democracy needs all the wisdom we can get.

The good news is that, for most of us, our ignorance is by choice -- we have chosen not to stay informed. Meaning that, in theory, there's a simple remedy -- make a different choice.

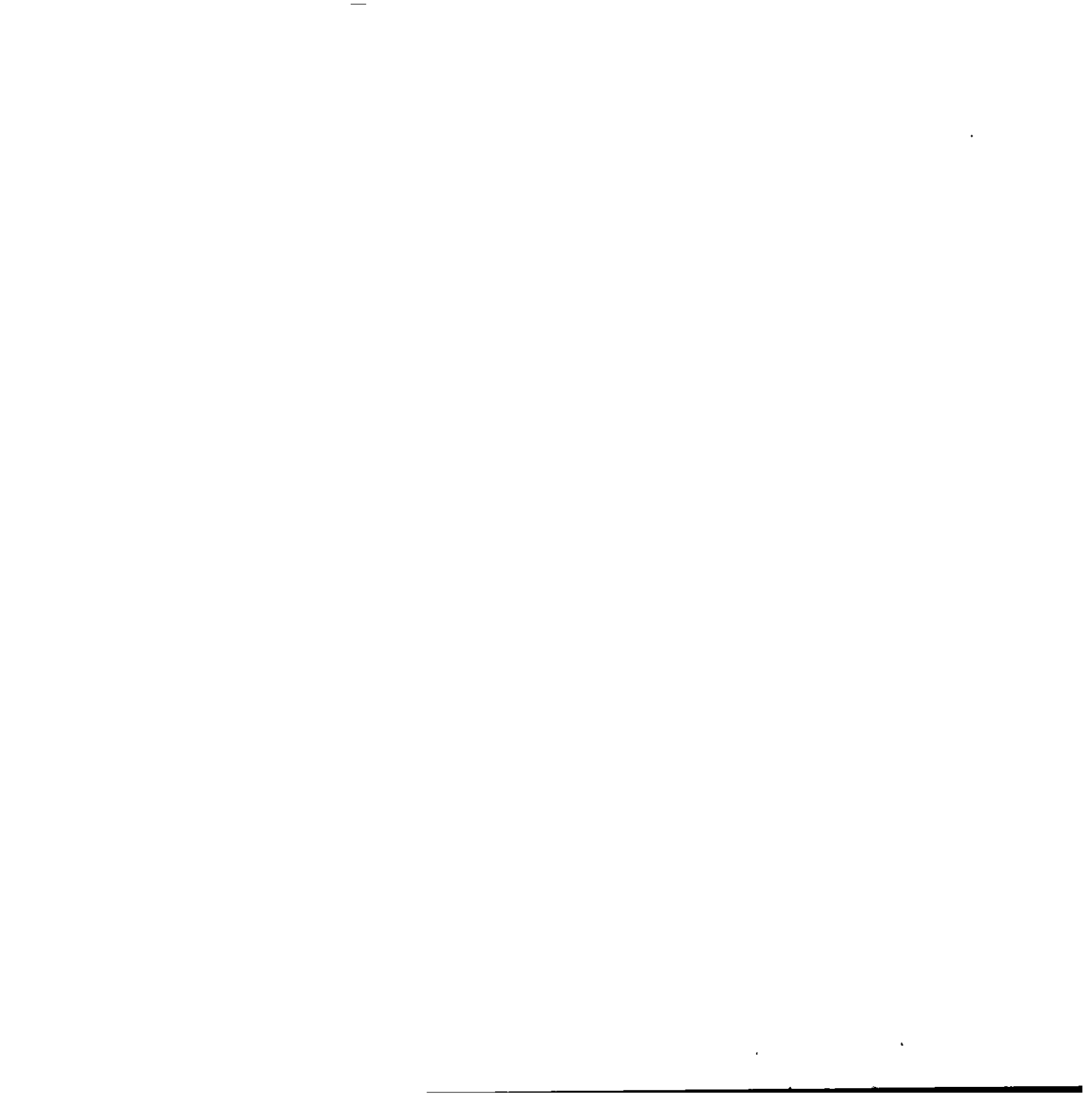
This point can't be emphasized enough. We are not a stupid people. Far from it. We're actually more educated than any generation in history. But we simply haven't been paying attention as citizens. And that's true no matter our party identification, or age, or race, or gender, or economic status. In an era when nearly every major newspaper and newsmagazine and political website is available online for free -- it's hard to argue there's any excuse anymore. We all lead busy lives, but life's about setting priorities. Let's hope more of us re-set our civic priorities in the years ahead.

"Song Of A Citizen" will be making that case over the next few years. We need your help to ensure that America is listening.

For more info about the state of the American political mind, check out the following:

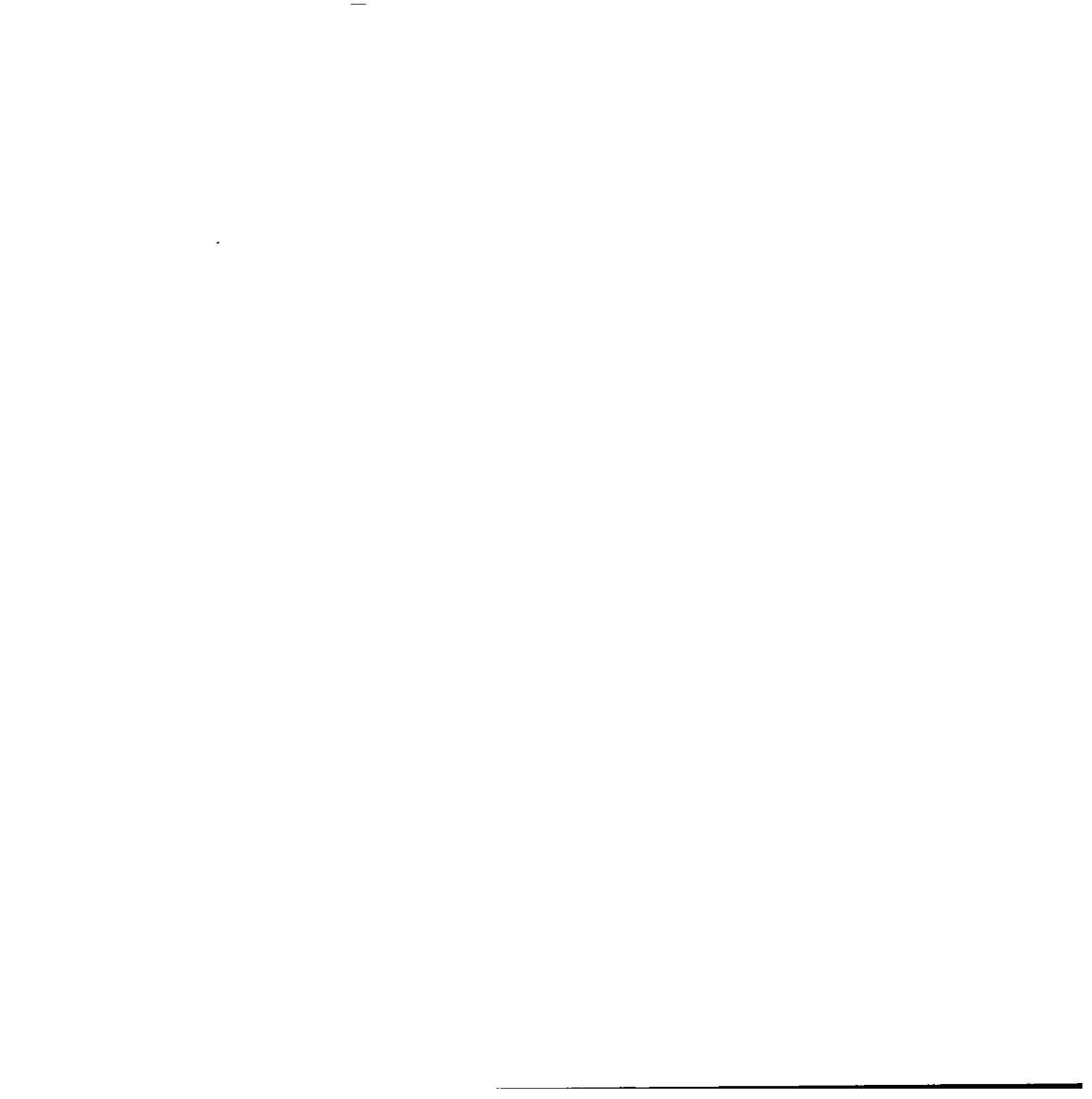


Department of Education - May 2011 "What young Americans know about Civics "
How Dumb Are We? - March 2011 - Newsweek - "The Country's Future Is Imperiled By Our Ignorance"
Political Knowledge Update - March, 2011 - "Pew Research Center for the People & The Press"
Enlightened Citizenship - 2011 - "Intercollegiate Studies Institute"
Pew Research Center -- January 2010 - "Political News IQ Update"
The Shaping of the American Mind - 2010 - "Intercollegiate Studies Institute"
First Amendment Center - 2009 - "State of the First Amendment "
Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs -- Sept. 2009 - "75% of Oklahoma High School Students Can't Name the First President of the U.S."
Public Agenda -- Aug. '09 - "What The Public Knows About Energy"
Penn. Schoen and Berland Associates -- June 2009 - "C-SPAN Supreme Court Survey about citizen knowledge of the Supreme Court"
Intercollegiate Studies Institute -- American Civic Literacy Program - 2008 - "Americans Fail The Test Of Civic Literacy"
National Endowment for the Arts -- Nov. 2007 - "Study links declines in reading with poorer academic and social outcomes"
Annenberg Public Policy Center -- Oct. 2007 - "Study on Judicial Elections reveal facts about low public knowledge of Supreme Court"
Newsweek -- Sept. 2007 - Dunce-Cap Nation survey called "What Do We Know?"
Pew Research Center for the People & The Press -- April 2007 - "Public Knowledge of Current Affairs Little Changed by News & Information Revolutions"
Knight Foundation -- Future Of The First Amendment "Survey Finds First Amendment Is Being Left Behind in U.S. High Schools"
First Amendment Center - 2007 - "Americans' Views Mixed on Basic Freedoms"
Drum Major Institute -- Sept. 2006 - "How Civic Education Died -- and why we need it back"
Zogby International -- Aug. 2006 - "More Americans Know Snow White's Dwarfs Than Supreme Court Judges"
McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum -- March 2006 - "Americans' Awareness of First Amendment Freedoms"
National Assessment of Educational Progress - 2006 - "Reports on what students know about civics"
The Nation's Civic Report Card - 2006 -
Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) -- Oct. 2003 - "Misperceptions, The Media, and the Iraq War"
Columbia University Law School study -- May, 2002 - "What Americans Don't Know About Our Constitution--and Why It Matters"
National Constitution Center - 1997 - "Startling Lack of Constitutional Knowledge"



Type of Civics Education

Promotion	2005-2014	1995-2004	Total
Increase or Change Course Curriculum, Graduation Requirements, or Civics Awareness in Schools; including Study of the Constitution, Bills of Rights, or Development of a 'Character Education' program	42	35	77
Create a Commission, Task Force, or Agency to Evaluate Civics Education	30	6	36
Promote or Require Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, or a Moment of Silence	3	21	24
Holiday Recognition or Principle Awareness, including establishing a 'Freedom Week', or observing holidays such as Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, 'Legislators Back-To-School' Day	7	9	16
Promote or Require U.S. Flag Display in Classrooms or Schools, including Flag Etiquette, or Display of the National Motto or Declaration of Independence	5	11	16
Encourage Community Service, Volunteerism, or Election Poll Working, including excused absences fro school for doing such work	8	6	14
Improve Voter Registration Programs or Awareness	9	4	13
Provide or Promote Leadship Programs, Internships, or Field Trips	5	1	6
Increase Professional Development of Teachers for Civics Education Instruction	3	0	3
Totals:	112	93	205

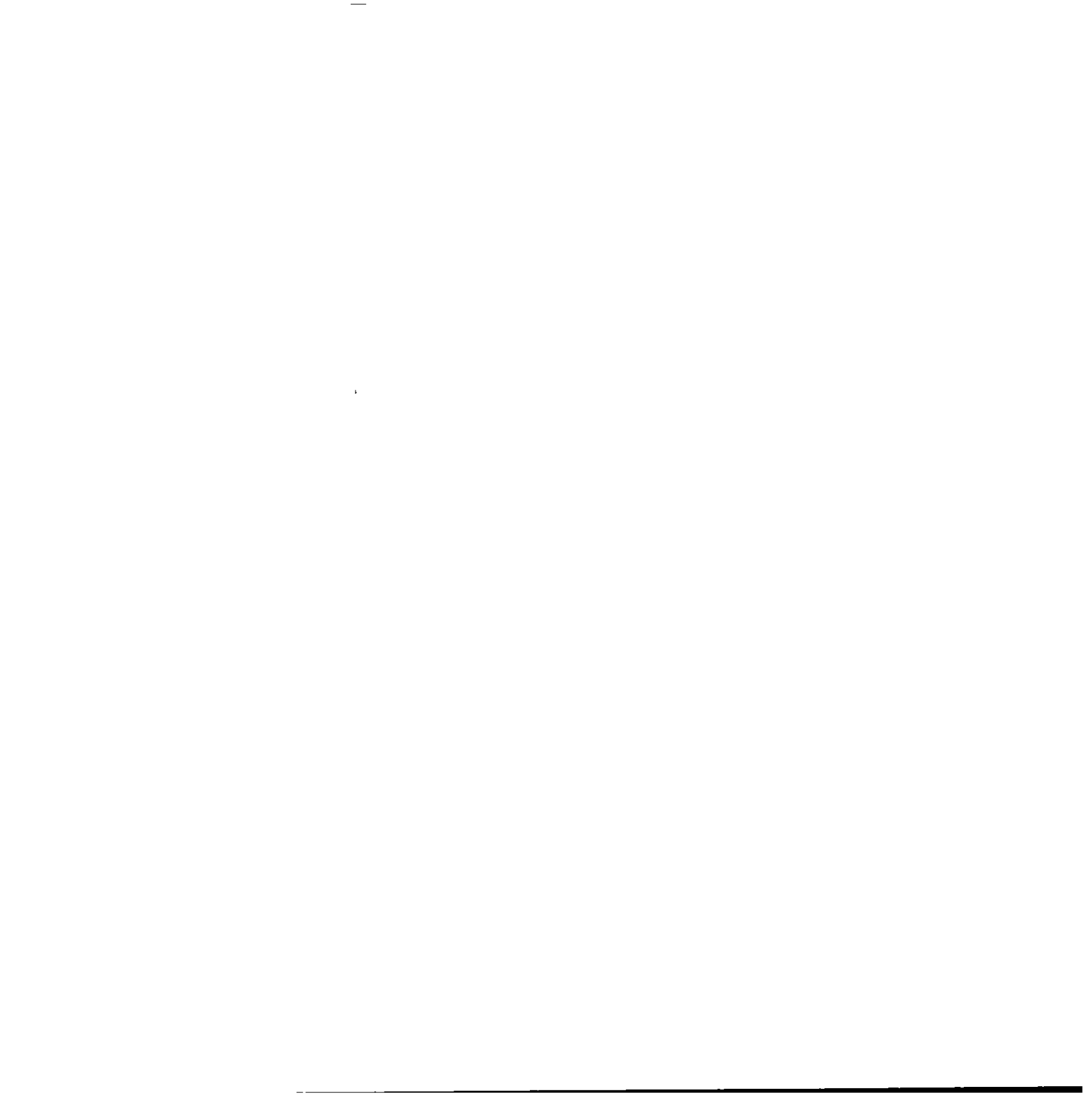


	STATE	ABBR	2014	2004	TOTAL
1	<u>Virginia</u>	VA	8	7	15
2	<u>Utah</u>	UT	9	5	14
3	<u>Illinois</u>	IL	9	2	11
4	<u>Arizona</u>	AZ	7	4	11
5	<u>California</u>	CA	7	4	11
6	<u>Colorado</u>	CO	3	6	9
7	<u>Kentucky</u>	KY	3	6	9
8	<u>Louisiana</u>	LA	6	2	8
9	<u>Tennessee</u>	TN	6	2	8
10	<u>Iowa</u>	IA	2	5	7
11	<u>Texas</u>	TX	1	6	7
12	<u>Arkansas</u>	AR	0	7	7
13	<u>Maryland</u>	MD	4	2	6
14	<u>Washington</u>	WA	5	0	5
15	<u>Oklahoma</u>	OK	3	2	5
16	<u>Rhode Island</u>	RI	3	2	5
17	<u>Florida</u>	FL	1	4	5
18	<u>Alabama</u>	AL	0	5	5
19	<u>Nevada</u>	NV	4	0	4
20	<u>Oregon</u>	OR	4	0	4
21	<u>Minnesota</u>	MN	2	2	4
22	<u>Ohio</u>	OH	2	2	4
23	<u>Connecticut</u>	CT	1	3	4
24	<u>Maine</u>	ME	1	3	4
25	<u>Mississippi</u>	MS	0	4	4

	STATE	ABBR	2014	2004	TOTAL
26	<u>Hawaii</u>	HI	3	0	3
27	<u>North Carolina</u>	NC	3	0	3
28	<u>Georgia</u>	GA	1	2	3
29	<u>New Hampshire</u>	NH	1	2	3
30	<u>Montana</u>	MT	2	0	2
31	<u>Indiana</u>	IN	1	1	2
32	<u>Kansas</u>	KS	1	1	2
33	<u>South Dakota</u>	SD	1	1	2
34	<u>West Virginia</u>	WV	1	1	2
35	<u>Idaho</u>	ID	0	2	2
36	<u>Missouri</u>	MO	0	2	2
37	<u>Massachusetts</u>	MA	1	0	1
38	<u>New Jersey</u>	NJ	1	0	1
39	<u>New Mexico</u>	NM	1	0	1
40	<u>New York</u>	NY	1	0	1
41	<u>North Dakota</u>	ND	1	0	1
42	<u>South Carolina</u>	SC	1	0	1
43	<u>Vermont</u>	VT	1	0	1
44	<u>Wisconsin</u>	WI	1	0	1
45	<u>Alaska</u>	AK	0	1	1
46	<u>Delaware</u>	DE	0	1	1
47	<u>Pennsylvania</u>	PA	0	1	1
48	<u>Michigan</u>	MI	0	0	0
49	<u>Nebraska</u>	NE	0	0	0
50	<u>Wyoming</u>	WY	0	0	0

Prepared by the Office of Senator Gary Stevens

Source: Education Commission of the States



NEWS

Polling Demonstrates Inconsistent Public Knowledge About Election Policy

January 15, 2014

Election Initiatives

[Return to Election Data Dispatches](#)

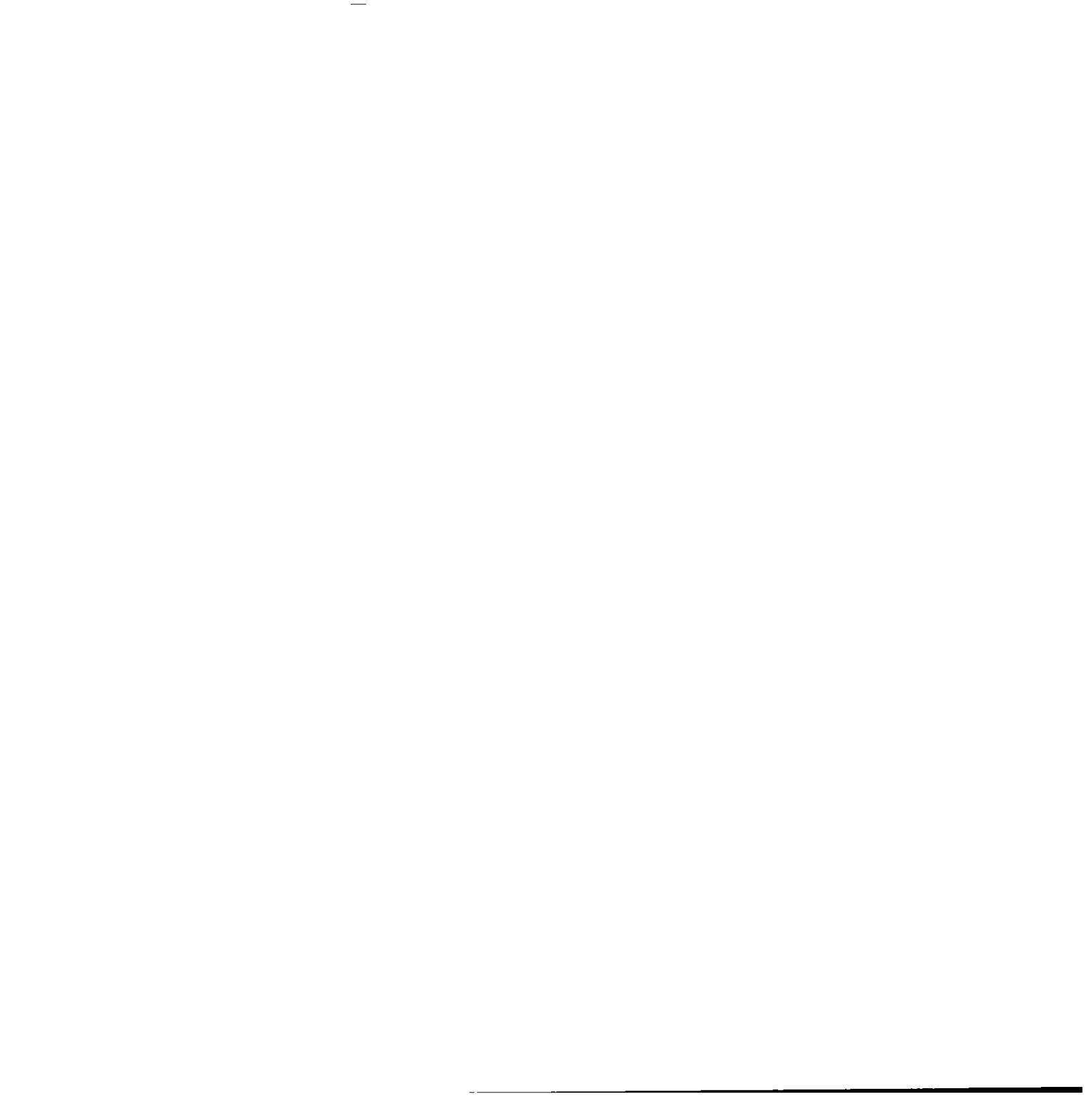
Polling conducted by Public Opinion Strategies and the Mellman Group for The Pew Charitable Trusts indicates that many voters are not well-informed about election policies. Early voting is the area in which survey respondents demonstrated the most accurate knowledge. Of particular note, voters in states that allow Election Day registration knew more about their registration options than those in states that do not allow it.

Among registered voters living in states with early voting:

- 11 percent did not realize that their state offered the option of voting early.
- 11 percent were unsure whether early voting was available in their state.

Among registered voters living in states where no excuse is necessary to request an absentee ballot:

- 10 percent believed that they would need to provide an excuse to vote absentee.



state.

In states that allow citizens to register and vote at the polls on Election Day:

- 16 percent believed their state did not allow Election Day registration.
- 14 percent did not know whether Election Day registration was offered in their state.

In states that do not allow voters to register on Election Day:

- 26 percent thought that they could register and vote on Election Day.
- 30 percent did not know whether Election Day registration was allowed.

These data come from a national sample of 1,001 registered voters contacted Sept. 18-26, 2013. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.10 percentage points.

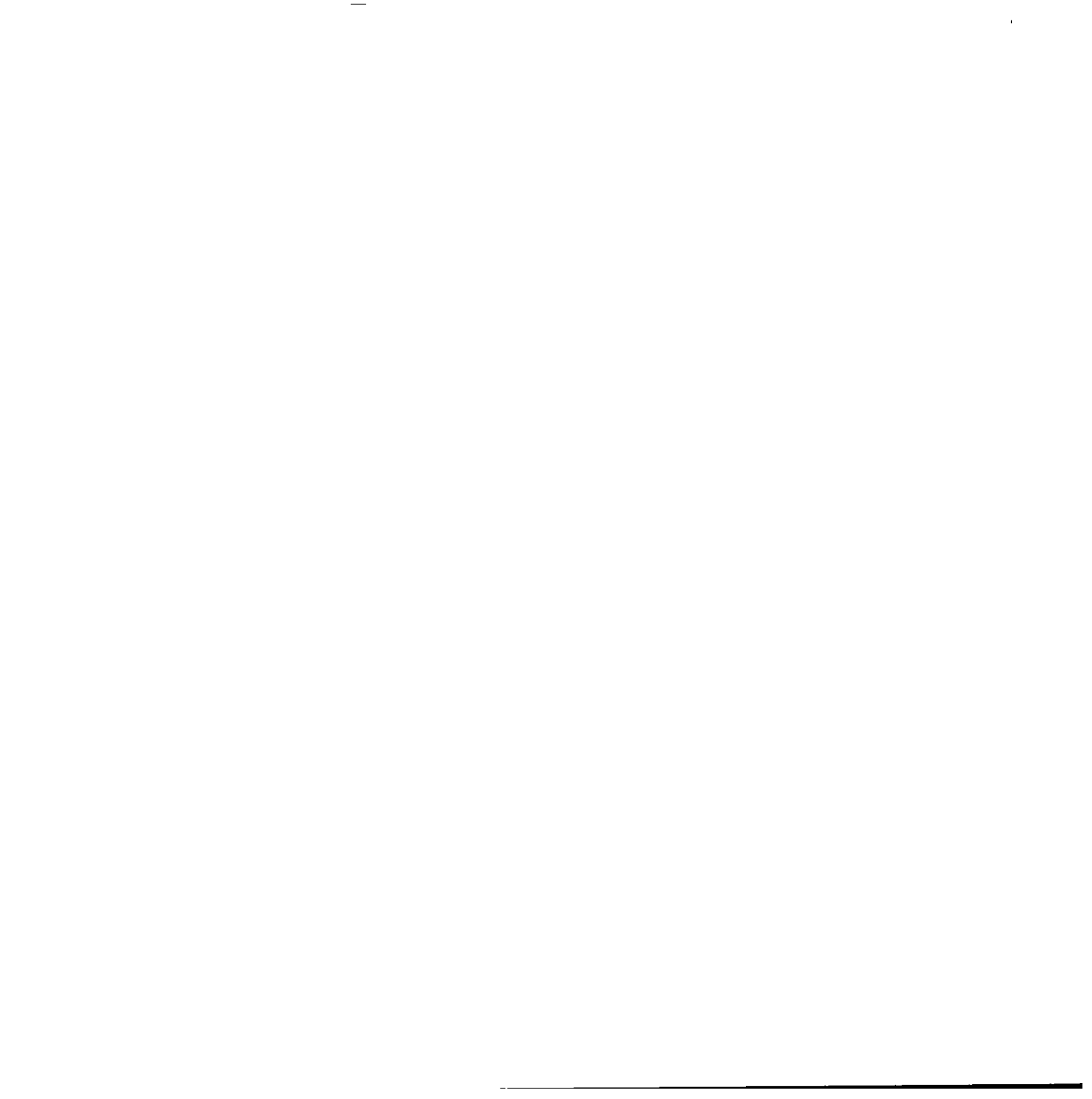
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TOPICS

Election Administration, Governing

PROJECTS

Election Initiatives



ABOUT: Staff

Michael B. Poliakov, Vice President of Policy

Dr. Poliakov became part of the ACTA team in March 2010. He oversees ACTA's programming and publications and works directly with our constituents on behalf of higher education reform. He previously served as vice president for academic affairs and research at the University of Colorado and in senior roles at the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Council on Teacher Quality, the American Academy for Liberal Education, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

He has taught at Georgetown University, George Washington University, Hillsdale College, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Wellesley College. He received his B.A. *magna cum laude* from Yale University and went on to study at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, and the University of Michigan, where he earned a Ph.D. in classical studies. He has been a junior fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies, and his research has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst, and the Alexander Von Humboldt Stiftung. He is the author of numerous books and journal articles in classical studies and education policy and has received the American Philological Association's Excellence in Teaching Award and the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Distinguished Service to Education Award.

