

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To establish a congressional commission on American civics renewal, and
for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KIM introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to
the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish a congressional commission on American civics
renewal, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “American Civics Re-
5 newal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) ESEA DEFINITIONS.—The terms “elemen-
9 tary school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary
10 school”, and “State educational agency” have the

1 meanings given the terms in section 8101 of the Ele-
2 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
3 U.S.C. 7801).

4 (2) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
5 means the Commission on American Civics Renewal
6 established under section 3(a).

7 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION**
8 **ON AMERICAN CIVICS RENEWAL.**

9 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a con-
10 gressional commission, to be known as the “Commission
11 on American Civics Renewal”, tasked with identifying
12 ways that the Federal Government can strengthen its sup-
13 port for civics education.

14 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall con-
16 sist of 8 members, with 1 member being appointed
17 by each of the following individuals:

18 (A) The Majority Leader and the Minority
19 Leader of the Senate.

20 (B) The chairman and ranking member of
21 the Committee on Health, Education, Labor,
22 and Pensions of the Senate.

23 (C) The Speaker and the Minority Leader
24 of the House of Representatives.

1 (D) The chair and ranking member of the
2 Committee on Education and Workforce of the
3 House of Representatives.

4 (2) DATE.—The appointments of the members
5 of the Commission shall be made not later than 60
6 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

7 (c) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The
8 Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice Chair-
9 person from among the members of the Commission at
10 the initial meeting of the Commission.

11 (d) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—

12 (1) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—A member of
13 the Commission shall be appointed for the life of the
14 Commission.

15 (2) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commis-
16 sion—

17 (A) shall not affect the powers of the Com-
18 mission; and

19 (B) shall be filled in the same manner as
20 the original appointment.

21 (e) MEETINGS.—

22 (1) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 30 days
23 after the date on which all members of the Commis-
24 sion have been appointed, the Commission shall hold
25 the first meeting of the Commission.

1 (2) FREQUENCY.—The Commission shall meet
2 at the call of the Chairperson.

3 (3) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of
4 the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a
5 lesser number of members may hold hearings.

6 **SEC. 4. DUTIES OF COMMISSION.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall—

8 (1) conduct a comprehensive review of the cur-
9 rent state of civics education, as of the date of the
10 review, across elementary and secondary education,
11 higher education, and adult learning;

12 (2) evaluate existing, as of the date of the re-
13 view, Federal programs and funding streams that
14 support civics education and recommend ways to
15 streamline, coordinate, or scale these programs to
16 ensure efficiency and equitable access;

17 (3) assess teacher preparation programs and
18 ongoing professional development opportunities for
19 civics and government instruction;

20 (4) collect best practices regarding teaching and
21 supporting civics education;

22 (5) provide guidance on how Federal investment
23 can leverage philanthropic, State, or local resources
24 to avoid imposing an unfunded mandate on State

1 educational agencies or local educational agencies;
2 and

3 (6) propose strategies to elevate civics education
4 as a national priority, in accordance with subsection
5 (e).

6 (b) STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT.—In carrying out
7 the duties under subsection (a), the Commission shall en-
8 gage with—

9 (1) public Federal entities, such as the National
10 Archives and Records Administration, the National
11 Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute for
12 Museum and Library Services, the Library of Con-
13 gress, the Department of Education, the Corporation
14 for National and Community Service, and the James
15 Madison Fellowship Foundation;

16 (2) State and local education leaders who have
17 advanced civics learning and understanding for edu-
18 cators and students; and

19 (3) nonpartisan organizations described in sec-
20 tion 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986
21 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such
22 Code, that have advanced civics learning and under-
23 standing for educators and students, such as the
24 United States Capitol Historical Society.

1 (c) PROPOSED CURRICULUM AND NATIONAL STRAT-
2 EGY.—After carrying out the activities described in para-
3 graphs (1) through (5) of subsection (a), the Commission
4 shall—

5 (1) develop a proposed age-appropriate civics
6 education curriculum for elementary school students,
7 secondary school students, and postsecondary edu-
8 cation students that—

9 (A) promotes the political thought and his-
10 tory of the United States along with the impact
11 of the representative democracy of the United
12 States and constitutional democracies globally;

13 (B) describes how the Federal Government
14 was founded on the principles of a representa-
15 tive democracy, constitutional government, indi-
16 vidual rights, market economics, religious free-
17 dom and tolerance, and freedom of thought and
18 inquiry;

19 (C) demonstrates the importance of stu-
20 dents developing civic-minded engagement; and

21 (D) provides examples of how lessons can
22 be taught beyond traditional classroom instruc-
23 tion and incorporated into subjects other than
24 history or civics; and

1 (2) by not later than 2 years after the date of
2 the first meeting of the Commission, publish a na-
3 tional strategy document that contains—

4 (A) examples of how State educational
5 agencies, local educational agencies, and schools
6 can partner with relevant Federal partners and
7 nonprofit organizations, including entities and
8 organizations described in subsection (b); and

9 (B) recommendations on how State and
10 local education leaders can implement the cur-
11 riculum described in paragraph (1).

12 (d) SUBMISSION OF CURRICULUM AND STRATEGY.—
13 By not later than 15 months after the date of the first
14 meeting of the Commission, the Commission shall submit
15 the proposed civics education curriculum and the national
16 strategy described in subsection (c) to—

17 (1) the Committee on Education and Workforce
18 of the House of Representatives;

19 (2) the Committee on Health, Education,
20 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

21 (3) the Secretary of Education; and

22 (4) the Archivist of the United States.

23 (e) DUTIES OF SECRETARY OF EDUCATION.—Not
24 later than 30 days after receiving the proposed civics edu-

1 cation curriculum and the national strategy described in
2 subsection (c), the Secretary of Education shall—

3 (1) inform all State educational agencies of the
4 availability of the curriculum and national strategy;
5 and

6 (2) provide a method, through a website or
7 other easily accessible means, for the State edu-
8 cational agencies to access the curriculum and na-
9 tional strategy.

10 **SEC. 5. POWERS OF COMMISSION.**

11 (a) HEARINGS.—The Commission may hold such
12 hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such
13 testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission
14 considers advisable to carry out this Act.

15 (b) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may secure
17 directly from a Federal department or agency such
18 information as the Commission considers necessary
19 to carry out this Act.

20 (2) FURNISHING INFORMATION.—On request of
21 the Chairperson of the Commission, the head of the
22 department or agency shall furnish the information
23 to the Commission.

24 (c) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use
25 the United States mails in the same manner and under

1 the same conditions as other departments and agencies of
2 the Federal Government.

3 (d) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and
4 dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

5 **SEC. 6. COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.**

6 (a) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—A member of the
7 Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Fed-
8 eral Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to
9 the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay pre-
10 scribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under sec-
11 tion 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (in-
12 cluding travel time) during which the member is engaged
13 in the performance of the duties of the Commission.

14 (b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Commis-
15 sion shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem
16 in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees
17 of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5,
18 United States Code, while away from their homes or reg-
19 ular places of business in the performance of services for
20 the Commission.

21 (c) STAFF.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the
23 Commission may, without regard to the civil service
24 laws (including regulations), appoint and terminate
25 an executive director and such other additional per-

1 sonnel as may be necessary to enable the Commis-
2 sion to perform its duties, except that the employ-
3 ment of an executive director shall be subject to con-
4 firmation by the Commission.

5 (2) COMPENSATION.—The Chairperson of the
6 Commission may fix the compensation of the execu-
7 tive director and other personnel without regard to
8 chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title
9 5, United States Code, relating to classification of
10 positions and General Schedule pay rates, except
11 that the rate of pay for the executive director and
12 other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for
13 level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316
14 of that title.

15 (d) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—A Fed-
16 eral Government employee may be detailed to the Commis-
17 sion without reimbursement, and such detail shall be with-
18 out interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

19 (e) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMIT-
20 TENT SERVICES.—The Chairperson of the Commission
21 may procure temporary and intermittent services under
22 section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates
23 for individuals that do not exceed the daily equivalent of
24 the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the
25 Executive Schedule under section 5316 of that title.

1 **SEC. 7. TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.**

2 The Commission shall terminate on the date that is
3 60 days after the date on which the Commission submits
4 the proposed civics curriculum and national strategy to the
5 Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of
6 the Senate under section 4(d).

7 **SEC. 8. APPROPRIATIONS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is appropriated, out of
9 amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to
10 the Commission \$2,000,000 to carry out this Act.

11 (b) AVAILABILITY.—The amounts made available
12 under this section shall be available beginning on the date
13 of enactment of this Act, and shall remain available until
14 expended.