

HOUSE No. 707

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michael J. Soter

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to cultural studies.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Michael J. Soter</i>	<i>8th Worcester</i>	<i>2/19/2021</i>
<i>Victoria Mesias</i>	<i>19 Lake St, Uxbridge, MA 01569</i>	<i>2/19/2021</i>
<i>James J. O'Day</i>	<i>14th Worcester</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Jeffrey N. Roy</i>	<i>10th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 707

By Mr. Soter of Bellingham, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 707) of Michael J. Soter and others that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education be authorized and assist in the implementation of standards and objectives on cultural studies. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act relative to cultural studies.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting after Section 1Q the following section:-

3 Section 1R: Cultural Studies

4 The department of elementary and secondary education shall authorize and assist in the
5 implementation of standards and objectives on cultural studies for students in grades 10-12 to
6 equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to develop and appreciate empathy and
7 value for individuals of all cultural backgrounds. These requirements for the course will be
8 developed by the Department of Education based on the outlined five syllabus sections. Each
9 section will be taught for four weeks. The Department of Education will create the learning tools
10 outlined to teach these classes. The following shall constitute the five syllabus sections:

11 (1) Identity: In this four-week section, students will study the meaning of words such as
12 race and ethnicity as they pertain to individuals and communities. This section will focus on how

13 various identities are defined on a national, state, local, and community level. An emphasis
14 should be put on how the development of stereotypes can reduce or magnify an individual.
15 Furthermore, this section should also include definitions and lessons about the LGBTQ
16 community and its perception locally, nationally, and throughout the world. Finally, this unit
17 should also cover what it means to be American and how that perception changed over time,
18 both within and between ethnic groups. The overall objective of the Identity Unit is for students
19 to explore themselves and how they fit into society.

20 (2) African American: In this four-week section, students will focus on and explore the
21 experience of African Americans both historically and in terms of contemporary issues, with an
22 emphasis on the post – WWII Civil Rights Movement. The focus should be on the role of
23 African Americans in the growth and development of the United States as well as the role that
24 self-determination played in the trajectory of the African American community. The section will
25 focus on how the political powers developed in the African American Community, how the
26 political power evolved, and how the power structure changed the United States. An emphasis
27 should also be on the Civil Rights movement, specifically exploring key players, the role that
28 youth played, and the influence of Freedom Riders. Finally, the section should emphasize the
29 challenges that African Americans face and the opportunities that students have to enact positive
30 change for the African American communities.

31 (3) American Indian: In this four-week section, students will study and explore the
32 experience of American Indians both historically and in terms of contemporary issues. This
33 section will cover cultural conflicts throughout history, including the differences between the
34 experiences of tribes in the United States and the economic and political results both within the
35 tribe and for the United States. Students should also understand the role that assimilation has

36 played in the experience of American Indians. Additionally, coursework should include the
37 outcomes and effects of gambling licenses and the economic reality for both tribes with and
38 without these licenses. Finally, the section should emphasize the challenges that American
39 Indians face and the opportunities that students have to enact positive change for American
40 Indians.

41 (4) Latino American: In this four-week section, students will study the experience of
42 Latino Americans both in history and in terms of contemporary issues. Students will explore
43 statistics and the diverse ethnic groups living in the United States within the Latino minority.
44 This section should emphasize the differences and similarities between South American, Central
45 American, and Mexican Americans. Students will also explore the role that Latinos played in the
46 growth and development of the United States as well as shifts in political power within the
47 Latino American community and how said power has evolved to work effectively with changing
48 power structures in the United States. Furthermore, this section will focus on the impacts of
49 immigration from a political and economic impact standpoint. Finally, the section should
50 emphasize the challenges that Latinos face and the opportunities that students have to enact
51 positive change for the Latino community.

52 (5) Asian American: In this four-week section, students will study and explore the
53 experience of Asian Americans both historically and in terms of contemporary issues. Students
54 will explore statistics and the diverse ethnic groups living in the United States within the Asian
55 minority. Students will explore the cultural and political similarities/differences between East
56 Asians, Southeast Asians, and Southern Asians. Students will also explore the role that Asians
57 played in the growth and development of the United States as well as shifts in political power
58 within the Asian American community and how said power has evolved to work effectively with

59 changing power structures in the United States. This section will focus on the challenges this
60 community faces as Asian Americans and how immigration impacted the political, social, and
61 economic realities in the Asian Community. This section will focus on the cultural perception of
62 the “model minority” that this culture faces. Finally, the section should emphasize the challenges
63 that Asian Americans face and the opportunities that students have to enact positive change for
64 the Asian communities.

65 SECTION 2. Notwithstanding any general provisions or special laws to the contrary, the
66 department of elementary and secondary education shall institute a grant program to identify
67 qualified practitioners for the implementation of this act.