

HOUSE BILL 356

By Powers

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 15;  
Title 49, Chapter 1 and Title 49, Chapter 6, relative  
to victims of communism.

WHEREAS, over 100 years have passed since the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the formation of the first communist government under Vladimir Lenin, leading to decades of oppression and violence under communist regimes throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, based on the economic philosophies of Karl Marx, communism has proven incompatible with the ideals of liberty, prosperity, and dignity of human life and has given rise to such infamous totalitarian dictators as Joseph Stalin, Vladimir Lenin, Mao Zedong, and Pol Pot; and

WHEREAS, communist regimes worldwide have killed more than 100 million people and subjected countless others to exploitation and unspeakable atrocities, with victims representing many different ethnicities, creeds, and backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, through false promises of equality and liberation or through coercion, brutality, and fear, communist regimes have systematically robbed their own citizens of the rights of freedom of worship, freedom of speech, and freedom of association; and

WHEREAS, many victims of communism were persecuted as political prisoners for speaking out against these regimes, and others were killed in genocidal state-sponsored purges of undesirable groups; and

WHEREAS, in addition to violating basic human rights, communist regimes have suppressed intellectual freedom, cultural life, and self determination movements in more than forty nations; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 10, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) Each LEA and public charter school shall recognize November 7 of each year as "Victims of Communism Day" to honor the people who have fallen victim to communist regimes across the world.

(b) Each LEA and public charter school that provides a world history and geography course to high school students enrolled in the LEA or public charter school shall provide the students enrolled in the course with at least forty-five (45) minutes of instruction on Victims of Communism Day that includes topics such as Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution, Joseph Stalin and the Soviet System, Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution, Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, and Nicolás Maduro and the Chavismo movement, and how victims suffered under these regimes through poverty, starvation, migration, systemized lethal violence, and suppression of speech. If Victims of Communism Day is on a day in which a high school student enrolled in a world history and geography course does not receive instruction for the course, then the student must receive the instruction required pursuant to this section on the immediately following day that the student receives instruction for the course.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect July 1, 2025, the public welfare requiring it.