

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 703

To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs that include the history of peoples of African descent in the settling and founding of America, the economic and political environments that led to the development, institutionalization, and abolition of slavery and its impact on all Americans, the exploration and expansion of America, impact on and contributions to the development and enhancement of American life, United States history, literature, the economy, politics, body of laws, and culture, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 1, 2023

Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. BROWN, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BOWMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. IVEY, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. MFUME, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MENG, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. CROCKETT, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. LEE of California, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. STRICKLAND, Mrs. SYKES, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs that include the history of peoples of African descent in the settling and founding of America, the economic and political environments that led to the development,

institutionalization, and abolition of slavery and its impact on all Americans, the exploration and expansion of America, impact on and contributions to the development and enhancement of American life, United States history, literature, the economy, politics, body of laws, and culture, 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 “Black History is Amer-
5 ican History Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Since before its founding, the United States
9 of America has benefited from and been enhanced by
10 the integral role African Americans have played in
11 our country’s history and contributions to the world.

12 (2) African-American history does not begin in
13 the Americas. It can be traced back to the great em-
14 pires of West Africa beginning in A.D. 790, which
15 aided the establishment and survival of colonies in
16 America and the New World, generally, and fought
17 against European oppression.

18 (3) African Americans have represented a sig-
19 nificant portion of the American population from
20 nearly 20 percent at the signing of the Declaration

1 of Independence, almost all of whom, if not all, were
2 victims of the largest forced deportations in recorded
3 history, the transatlantic slave trade and resulting
4 African diaspora. It is estimated over 10,000,000
5 free Africans were enslaved between the mid-fif-
6 teenth and nineteenth centuries during the diaspora.

7 (4) Slavery was not abolished and African
8 Americans not acknowledged as American citizens
9 until the mid-nineteenth century, servitude did not
10 abate their contributions to the settlement, growth,
11 and development of the United States, which contin-
12 ued through Post-Reconstruction, Jim Crow, indus-
13 trialization, World Wars and conflicts, innovation
14 and inventiveness, constitutional progress, and every
15 aspect of American society.

16 (5) During the civil rights movement of the
17 1950s and 1960s, civil rights leaders and activists
18 championed the fight for equal rights, including vot-
19 ing rights, for all African Americans.

20 (6) The seminal case of *Brown v. Board of*
21 *Education*, decided May 17, 1954, found that the
22 decades-old policy of separate but equal access to
23 education was inherently unequal, and the segrega-
24 tion of Black public-school students was no longer
25 the law of the land.

1 (7) African Americans continue to fight dis-
2 crimination, structural racism, economic inequities,
3 and benign and overt omission of the integral role
4 they played in our country’s rise to greatness.

5 (8) A number of States have passed educational
6 laws requiring Black history be incorporated into the
7 curricula of all public schools.

8 (9) Congress established the National Museum
9 of African American History and Culture in 2003
10 after decades of efforts to promote and highlight the
11 contributions of African Americans, which serves as
12 an indication of the national importance of exam-
13 ining Black history. Since opening in 2016, the mu-
14 seum has worked to educate the public on the Amer-
15 ican story through the lens of African-American his-
16 tory and culture and provide educators, parents,
17 caregivers, and students with tools and resources on
18 the African-American experience, its national im-
19 pact, race, racism, and the importance of tolerance
20 and inclusivity.

21 (10) According to a 2015 research study con-
22 ducted by the National Museum of African Amer-
23 ican History and Culture and reported in Research
24 into the State of African American History and Cul-
25 ture in K–12 Public Schools, key findings indicated

1 that teachers considered Black history as influential
2 in understanding the complexity of United States
3 history.

4 (11) The importance of Black history is re-
5 flected in the National Assessment of Educational
6 Progress United States History framework, from
7 pre-colonization through contemporary America.

8 (12) The Federal Government, through support
9 for educational activities of national museums estab-
10 lished under Federal law, can assist teachers in ef-
11 forts to incorporate historically accurate instruction
12 on the comprehensive history of African Americans
13 and students in their exploration of Black history as
14 an integral part of American history.

15 **SEC. 3. AMERICAN HISTORY AND CIVICS EDUCATION.**

16 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—Section 2231(a) of the
17 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
18 U.S.C. 6661(a)) is amended—

19 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by
20 inserting “, which shall include Black history,” after
21 “American history”; and

22 (2) in paragraph (2)—

23 (A) by inserting “which shall include Black
24 history,” after “American history,”; and

1 (B) by inserting “, which shall include
2 Black history” after “traditional American his-
3 tory”.

4 (b) PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACADEMIES
5 FOR AMERICAN HISTORY AND CIVICS.—Section 2232 of
6 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
7 U.S.C. 6662) is amended—

8 (1) in subsection (a)—

9 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, which
10 shall include Black history,” after “American
11 History”; and

12 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, which
13 shall include Black history,” after “American
14 History”;

15 (2) in subsection (c)(1), by inserting “, which
16 shall include Black history,” after “American his-
17 tory”;

18 (3) in subsection (e)—

19 (A) in paragraph (1)—

20 (i) by inserting “, which shall include
21 Black history,” after “American history”;

22 (ii) in subparagraph (A)—

23 (I) by inserting “, which shall in-
24 clude Black history,” after “teachers
25 of American history”; and

1 (II) by inserting “, which shall
2 include Black history,” after “subjects
3 of American history”; and

4 (iii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting
5 “, which shall include Black history,” after
6 “American history”;

7 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, which
8 shall include Black history,” after “American
9 history”; and

10 (C) in paragraph (4), by inserting “, and
11 with the Smithsonian Institution’s National
12 Museum of African American History and Cul-
13 ture initiative providing programs and resources
14 for educators and students” after “National
15 Parks”; and

16 (4) in subsection (f)—

17 (A) by inserting “, which shall include
18 Black history,” after “American history”;

19 (B) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “,
20 which shall include Black history,” after
21 “American history”; and

22 (C) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “,
23 which shall include Black history,” after
24 “American history”.

1 (c) NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—Section 2233 of the Ele-
2 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
3 6663) is amended—

4 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “which shall
5 include Black history,” after “American history,”;
6 and

7 (2) in subsection (b), by inserting “which shall
8 include Black history,” after “American history,”.

9 (d) NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
10 PROGRESS.—Section 303(b)(2)(D) of the National As-
11 sessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20
12 U.S.C. 9622(b)(2)(D)) is amended by inserting “(which
13 shall include Black history)” after “history,”.

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