

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1359

To direct the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture to conduct a study on Black history education efforts in public elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 13, 2025

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN (for herself, Mrs. McIVER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. CARSON, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. TLAIB, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WATERS, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. TURNER of Texas, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. BROWN, Ms. PRESSLEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. THANEDAR, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GRIJALVA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL

To direct the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture to conduct a study on Black history education efforts in public elementary and secondary schools, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Black History Matters
3 Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. STUDY AND REPORT ON BLACK HISTORY EDU-**
5 **CATION.**

6 (a) STUDY.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—During the period described
8 in paragraph (2), the Director of the National Mu-
9 seum of African American History and Culture (re-
10 ferred to in this Act as the “Director”) shall conduct
11 a study on Black history education efforts in public
12 elementary and secondary schools.

13 (2) PERIOD.—The Director shall, with respect
14 to the study required under paragraph (1)—

15 (A) begin such study not later than 180
16 days after the date of the enactment of this
17 Act; and

18 (B) complete such study not later than 3
19 years after the date of the enactment of this
20 Act.

21 (b) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the study under sub-
22 section (a), the Director shall—

23 (1) identify States and local educational agen-
24 cies that require Black history education as part of
25 the curriculum taught in public elementary and sec-
26 ondary schools;

(2) identify States and local educational agencies that do not require Black history education as part of the curriculum taught in public elementary and secondary schools;

(3) assess the quality of Black history education provided by public elementary and secondary schools, including through the qualitative and quantitative analysis of such indicators as—

(A) in-class discussion;

(B) educational activities conducted outside the classroom, including homework assignments; and

(C) project based learning;

(4) assess the types and quality of instructional materials used to teach students about Black history;

(5) examine the duration and comprehensiveness of any Black history-related courses or lessons provided by public elementary and secondary schools; and

(6) analyze the approaches used by such schools to assess students' knowledge of Black history, including the use of traditional and nontraditional assessments.

(c) REPORT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the completion of
2 the study under subsection (a), the Director shall
3 prepare and submit to Congress a report on the re-
4 sults of the study.

5 (2) DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL.—The report
6 required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not
7 later than 180 days after the completion of the
8 study under subsection (a)(2)(B).

9 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

10 (1) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary
11 school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary
12 school”, and “State” have the meanings given those
13 terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
14 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

15 (2) BLACK HISTORY.—The term “Black his-
16 tory” means the study and stories of Black life in
17 the United States and around the world, with a spe-
18 cific focus on the triumphs and struggles (including
19 political, social, and cultural achievements) of Afri-
20 can Americans throughout the United States.

21 (3) BLACK HISTORY EDUCATION.—The term
22 “Black history education” means educational activi-
23 ties that are specifically intended—

24 (A) to improve students’ awareness and
25 understanding of the history of people of Afri-

1 can descent, especially as it relates to United
2 States history;

3 (B) to educate students on the lessons of
4 chattel slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow laws,
5 and the Civil Rights movement as a means to
6 raise awareness about the importance of pre-
7 venting genocide, hate, and bigotry against any
8 group of people; and

9 (C) to study the history of racism, its deep
10 historical roots, the use of discrimination and
11 propaganda that target the Black people, and
12 the evolving nature of white supremacy over
13 time.

14 (4) PROJECT BASED LEARNING.—The term
15 “project based learning” means a teaching method
16 through which students learn by actively engaging in
17 real-world and personally meaningful projects.

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