

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 844

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

JANUARY 31, 2025

Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. BISHOP, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BROWN, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. FROST, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. IVEY, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MAGAZINER, Mrs. MCBATH, Mrs. McIVER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MENG, Ms. NORTON, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. STRICKLAND, Mrs. SYKES, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, and Ms. WILSON of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and 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.

1 (3) African Americans have represented a sig-
2 nificant portion of the American population from
3 nearly 20 percent at the signing of the Declaration
4 of Independence, almost all of whom, if not all, were
5 victims of the largest forced deportations in recorded
6 history, the transatlantic slave trade and resulting
7 African diaspora. It is estimated over 10,000,000
8 free Africans were enslaved between the mid-fif-
9 teenth and nineteenth centuries during the diaspora.

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

19 (5) During the civil rights movement of the
20 1950s and 1960s, civil rights leaders and activists
21 championed the fight for equal rights, including vot-
22 ing rights, for all African Americans.

23 (6) The seminal case of *Brown v. Board of*
24 *Education*, decided May 17, 1954, found that the
25 decades-old policy of separate but equal access to

1 education was inherently unequal, and the segrega-
2 tion of Black public-school students was no longer
3 the law of the land.

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

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

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

24 (10) According to a 2015 research study con-
25 ducted by the National Museum of African Amer-

1 ican History and Culture and reported in Research
2 into the State of African American History and Cul-
3 ture in K–12 Public Schools, key findings indicated
4 that teachers considered Black history as influential
5 in understanding the complexity of United States
6 history.

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

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

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

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

22 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by
23 inserting “, which shall include Black history,” after
24 “American history”; and

25 (2) in paragraph (2)—

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

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

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

10 (1) in subsection (a)—

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

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

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

20 (3) in subsection (e)—

21 (A) in paragraph (1)—

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

24 (ii) in subparagraph (A)—

1 (I) by inserting “, which shall in-
2 clude Black history,” after “teachers
3 of American history”; and

4 (II) by inserting “, which shall
5 include Black history,” after “subjects
6 of American history”; and

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

10 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, which
11 shall include Black history,” after “American
12 history”; and

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

19 (4) in subsection (f)—

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

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

1 (C) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “,
2 which shall include Black history,” after
3 “American history”.

4 (c) NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—Section 2233 of the Ele-
5 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
6 6663) is amended—

7 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “which shall
8 include Black history,” after “American history,”;
9 and

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

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

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