

SCHOOLS MUST OBSERVE ONE WEEK AS "PATRIOT WEEK" EACH SCHOOL YEAR

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Senate Bill 121 (Substitute S-1)
Sponsor: Sen. Patrick Colbeck
House Committee: Education
Senate Committee: Education

Complete to 3-19-14

A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 121 (S-1) AS REPORTED FROM THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Senate Bill 121 (S-1) would amend the Revised School Code (MCL 380.1167) to encourage public schools to observe one week each school year as "Patriot Week." A more detailed description of the bill follows.

The bill specifies that "the Legislature recognizes that a vital purpose of education pursuant to the State Constitution of 1963 is to develop good citizens. In order to develop good citizens, an understanding of American history and America's first principles is indispensable."

Toward that end, Patriot Week "is to be observed by all public school teachers and pupils" as delineated in the newly added section of statute. Specifically, a school board or charter school board would be encouraged to ensure that during its Patriot Week the following instruction was provided to students in grades kindergarten through 12 in an age- and grade-appropriate manner:

- Instruction in "the sacrifices made by millions of military personnel and their families in the defense of liberty" from the Revolutionary War to current conflicts, and the significance of Veterans Day, Independence Day, and Memorial Day.
- Instruction affirming that the first principles upon which America was founded and flourishes are: *the rule of law, the social compact, equality, unalienable rights, and limited government.*
- Instruction in the founding documents that would explore how various historical documents "embody America's first principles and have advanced American liberty." (The bill cites the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Congressional resolution forwarding the Constitution to the states as key documents.)

(The language of the bill suggests that each district or charter school could choose which week in the year is to be observed as "Patriot Week.")

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no fiscal impact on state or local government.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION:

The House Education Committee reported out the Senate-passed version of the bill without amendments.

POSITIONS:

The Great Lakes Education Project supports the bill. (3-5-14)

Constituting Michigan supports the bill. (3-5-14)

Four students testified in support of the bill. (3-5-14)

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.