



Cosponsor the Civics Secures Democracy Act

Co-leads: Tom Cole (R-OK), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR)

[Endorsing Organizations](#)

Dear Colleague,

We invite you to be a cosponsor of the bipartisan **Civics Secures Democracy Act**, which would restore the importance placed on civics education in American classrooms.

Over the last several decades, civics education in American schools has seen a significant decline. The consequences of this neglect towards civics education can be seen in our current divisive politics and lack of knowledge and understanding of democratic principles, norms, and institutions. Following the violent attack on the United States Capitol and our democracy on January 6th, it is clear that a robust investment in civics education is needed now more than ever.

Research shows that students who receive a quality civics education are^[1]:

- More likely to vote and to discuss politics at home;
- More likely to complete college and develop skills that lead to employment;
- Four times more likely to give back to their communities through volunteering and working on community issues; and
- More confident in their ability to speak publicly and communicate with their elected representatives.

During the same time that domestic education has seen a continued decrease in civics education, the United States has invested substantially more in promoting democracy abroad. More than \$2 billion annually is allocated for democracy promotion activities managed by the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Comparatively, federal funding for civics education is only \$3 million, or approximately \$0.05 per US K-12 student. This discrepancy must be corrected.

The combination of lack of funding to support high quality civics learning, as well as the absence of testing and school accountability measures for students learning in the subject, has resulted in

^[1] 'The Republic is (Still) At Risk – and Civics is Part of the Solution' (CivX Now Coalition with Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement) 2017

<https://www.civxnow.org/sites/default/files/resources/SummitWhitePaper.pdf>

significant numbers of US schools dropping civics education classes from middle and high school curriculum, and reducing the number of hours the subject is taught in elementary school. This growing problem is particularly acute in lower income, urban, and rural schools, which have reduced or eliminated civics learning to focus on literacy and math scores that are heavily weighted and sanctioned in school accountability measures.

It is time we focus on educating our citizens to sustain democracy at home or we will continue to see the disturbing trend of our young people dismissing the importance of living in a democracy.

The Civics Secures Democracy Act of 2021 would create a variety of grants to states, non-profits, institutions of higher education, and civics education researchers to support and expand access to civics and history education. The legislation would fund the Truman Scholarship and fellowships named for President Madison and revolution-era leader Prince Hall to strengthen and diversify the American history and civics teaching corps. It includes the USA Civics Act, which would reauthorize existing grant programs targeted to strengthen American civics programs and promote more comprehensive studies of American history. Additionally, the bill would require the National Assessments of Education Progress (NAEPs) in civics and history education to be administered every two years in grades four, eight, and twelve, and make disaggregated, state level results available.

The Act specifically prohibits use of the funds for the development of any national curriculum in American history or civics education.

If you would like to cosponsor the Civics Secures Democracy Act or have any questions, please contact Harper White in Rep. DeLauro's office (harper.white@mail.house.gov), Shane Hand in Rep. Cole's office (shane.hand@mail.house.gov) or Martha Cramer in Rep. Blumenauer's office (martha.cramer@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

Rosa L. DeLauro

Tom Cole

Earl Blumenauer

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress