

By: Senator(s) Hewes

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2052

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI CIVIC LITERACY ACT; TO  
2 REQUIRE THE TEACHING OF THE NATION'S FOUNDING AND RELATED  
3 DOCUMENTS DURING THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS; TO REQUIRE THE STATE  
4 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR  
5 AND LEGISLATURE ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CURRICULUM ON CIVIC  
6 LITERACY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

8 **SECTION 1.** This act may be cited as the Mississippi Civic  
9 Literacy Act.

10 **SECTION 2.** The Legislature finds and declares that:

11 (a) The adoption of the Declaration of Independence in  
12 1776 and the signing of the United States Constitution were  
13 principal events in the history of the United States, the  
14 Declaration of Independence providing the philosophical foundation  
15 on which this nation rests and the Constitution of the United  
16 States providing its structure of government;

17 (b) The Federalist Papers embody the most eloquent and  
18 forceful argument made in support of the adoption of our  
19 republican form of government;

20 (c) The Emancipation Proclamation issued by President  
21 Abraham Lincoln in 1862 clarified human rights during the crisis  
22 of the War Between the States;

23 (d) These documents stand as the foundation of our form  
24 of democracy, providing at the same time the basis of our national  
25 identity and the vehicle for orderly growth and change;

26 (e) Many Americans lack even the most basic knowledge  
27 and understanding of the history of our nation and the principles  
28 set forth in the Declaration of Independence, codified in the



29 Constitution and defended in the Federalist Papers and the  
30 Emancipation Proclamation; and

31 (f) The survival of the Republic requires that our  
32 nation's children, the future guardians of its heritage and  
33 participants in its governance, have a firm knowledge and  
34 understanding of its principles and history.

35 **SECTION 3.** The purpose and intent of this act are to  
36 require, during the high school years, the teaching of the  
37 nation's founding and related documents, which shall include the  
38 Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the  
39 Federalist Papers and the Emancipation Proclamation of 1862.

40 **SECTION 4.** The State Department of Education shall develop  
41 and report to the Education Committees of the Senate and House of  
42 Representatives which specifically describes the civic literacy  
43 curriculum content and teacher training to ensure that the intent  
44 of this legislation is satisfied.

45 **SECTION 5.** Beginning with the 2012 Regular Session, the  
46 State Department of Education shall submit an annual report to the  
47 Governor and the Legislature describing the effectiveness of these  
48 civic literacy courses involved pursuant to Sections 3 and 4 of  
49 this act.

50 **SECTION 6.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
51 and after July 1, 2011.

