

By: Representative Sanford (By Request)

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 1356

1 AN ACT TO ENACT THE "MISSISSIPPI FOUNDING PRINCIPLES ACT"; TO
 2 REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF
 3 EDUCATION TO REQUIRE EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT TO INCORPORATE
 4 INSTRUCTION ON CERTAIN FOUNDING PRINCIPLES AND DOCUMENTS OF THE
 5 UNITED STATES INTO REQUIRED STUDIES OF THE UNITED STATES
 6 CONSTITUTION AND THE MISSISSIPPI SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS; TO
 7 SPECIFY CERTAIN MINIMUM CONTENT REQUIREMENTS; TO REQUIRE THE STATE
 8 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO BIENNIALY REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
 9 OF THIS ACT TO THE STATE LEGISLATURE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE
 10 DEPARTMENT SHALL OFFER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
 11 REGARDING FOUNDING PRINCIPLES INSTRUCTION TO TEACHERS; AND FOR
 12 RELATED PURPOSES.

13 WHEREAS, the United States of America is currently
 14 celebrating the 246th year of its independence and the 235th year
 15 of its people living free under the United States Constitution,
 16 the greatest governing principles ever written; and

17 WHEREAS, it is the obligation and responsibility of every
 18 United States citizen to understand the importance of the
 19 Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Federalist
 20 Papers, and other documents that set forth and explain the
 21 principles of federalism, a governing system whereby the states
 22 and the federal government share responsibility for governing, and



23 understand the rights of the people to private property, due
24 process, and other inalienable rights; and

25 WHEREAS, the Tenth Amendment to the United States
26 Constitution provides that "the powers not delegated to the United
27 States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states,
28 are reserved to the State respectively, or to the people"; and

29 WHEREAS, the preservation of our great nation depends on
30 strict adherence to the Tenth Amendment and other principles that
31 protect the states and the people from overzealous acts of all
32 branches of the federal government; and

33 WHEREAS, many preeminent legal scholars and jurists,
34 including Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, have observed that
35 "Congress will nibble away at state sovereignty, bit by bit, until
36 someday essentially nothing is left but a gutted shell"; and

37 WHEREAS, understanding the proper role and the limitations of
38 government have been a recurring issue for our courts throughout
39 the history of our nation; and

40 WHEREAS, every state has constitutional requirements for the
41 education of the children of the state; and

42 WHEREAS, many states recognize the importance of complying
43 with its constitutional mandate of education by enacting laws that
44 require graduating students to have a working knowledge of this
45 country's founding principles and documents; and



46 WHEREAS, as stated by Patrick Henry, "No free government, or
47 the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people [but] by
48 a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles"; and

49 WHEREAS, educating our children on the founding principles
50 and documents of our nation is crucial to the continuance of our
51 free Republic: NOW, THEREFORE,

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

53 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the
54 "Mississippi Founding Principles Act."

55 **SECTION 2.** (1) The State Board of Education and the State
56 Department of Education shall require each school district to
57 incorporate instruction on the founding principles and documents
58 that shaped the United States into the required study of the
59 United States Constitution and the Mississippi Social Studies
60 Standards upon the next cyclical review. The board and department
61 shall require the curricula to include, at a minimum, the
62 Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the
63 Federalist Papers, instruction on the structure of government, the
64 role of the separation of powers and the freedoms guaranteed by
65 the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution.

66 (2) The State Department of Education biennially shall
67 submit a report by October 15 of each even-numbered year,
68 commencing in 2024, to the Senate Education Committee and the
69 House Education Committee documenting the implementation of this
70 section.



71 (3) The State Department of Education shall make available
72 professional development opportunities to teachers regarding
73 subsection (1) by physical or electronic means.

74 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
75 and after July 1, 2022.

