

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION - 1990

Legislative Document

No. 2472

S.P. 1000

In Senate, April 5, 1990

Reported by Senator ESTES of York for the Joint Standing Committee on Education pursuant to Joint Order S.P. 974.

Joy J. O'Brien

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND NINETY

Resolve, to Encourage the Study of the Nation's Founding and Related Documents by Maine Students.



2 **Preamble.** Whereas, the adoption of the Declaration of
Independence in 1776, and the signing of the United States
4 Constitution were principal events in the history of the United
States, the Declaration of Independence providing the
6 philosophical foundation on which the nation rests and the
Constitution of the United States providing its structure of
government; and

8
10 **Whereas,** the Federalist Papers embody the most eloquent and
forceful argument made in support of the adoption of our
12 republican form of government; and

14 **Whereas,** these documents stand as the foundation of our form
of democracy providing at the same time the touchstone of our
16 national identity and the vehicle for orderly growth and change;
and

18 **Whereas,** in order to function effectively in our society,
Americans need a basic knowledge and understanding about the
20 history of our nation, the philosophies underlying its founding
and the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence,
22 codified in the Constitution of the United States and defended in
the Federalist Papers; and

24
26 **Whereas,** the survival of the republic requires that our
nation's children, the future guardians of its heritage and
28 participants in its governance, have a firm knowledge and
understanding of its principles and history; now, therefore, be it

30 **Sec. 1. Civic literacy. Resolved:** That school boards are
encouraged to provide, at appropriate times, for the study by all
32 students of the nation's founding and related documents, which
shall include at least the major principles in the Declaration of
34 Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments,
and the most important of the Federalist Papers; and be it further

36
38 **Sec. 2. Demonstrated knowledge. Resolved:** That school boards
are encouraged to ensure that all students demonstrate knowledge
and understanding of the nation's founding and related documents
40 through community service programs; and be it further

42 **Sec. 3. Application through experience. Resolved:** That school
boards are encouraged to provide multiple experiences during
44 school activities and through community-based programs to expose
all students to the principles that exemplify the values inherent
46 in the nation's founding and related documents; and be it further

48 **Sec. 4. Passing grades. Resolved:** That school boards are
encouraged to include among the requirements for graduation from
50 high school a passing grade in all courses that include primary
instruction in the Declaration of Independence, the United States

2 Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the
Federalist Papers; and be it further

4 **Sec. 5. Curriculum. Resolved:** That the Department of
Educational and Cultural Services, the school boards and the
6 teacher education preparation programs at post-secondary
educational institutions in the State, as appropriate, are
8 encouraged to establish curriculum content and provide for
in-service and preservice teacher training to ensure that
10 teachers are adequately prepared and supported to carry out the
intent and provisions of this resolve. The curriculum content
12 established should include a review of the contributions made by
Americans of all races during the period in which our nation was
14 founded; and be it further

16 **Sec. 6. Report. Resolved:** That the Commissioner of
Educational and Cultural Services shall include in the annual
18 report to the Legislature an update on the implementation of this
resolve.

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22 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

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26 The purpose of this resolve is to promote the study and
understanding of the importance of the philosophies underlying
the founding of this country as set forth in the Declaration of
28 Independence, codified in the Constitution of the United States
and explained in the Federalist Papers. School administrative
30 units are encouraged to provide appropriate learning
opportunities for students on those subjects and to require
32 demonstration of familiarity with them. The Commissioner of
Educational and Cultural Services is urged to include questions
34 on the founding documents in the Maine Education Assessment tests
and is directed to report on the effect of this Act in the annual
36 report to the Legislature.