

CS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1(EDC)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/16/15

Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): SENATOR STEVENS

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to a legislative task force on civics education.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 **WHEREAS** research shows that one of the most significant ways schools can foster
4 youth civic engagement is by providing students with opportunities to engage in reflective
5 civic action through their classes and cocurricular and extracurricular activities; and

6 **WHEREAS**, rather than providing a single course in civics, educators should provide
7 civics learning activities from preschool through college, informed by best practices that
8 develop civics knowledge, including knowledge of our system of government and how it
9 works, and civics skills, including intellectual and participatory skills necessary for an active
10 civic life; and

11 **WHEREAS** opportunities for students to engage in real-world learning activities can
12 enhance the civic development of students and provide authentic learning experiences; and

13 **WHEREAS** research suggests that educators who include in their pedagogy a
14 component of civil service opportunities may better help students achieve greater levels of
15 academic success and increased motivation; and

16 **WHEREAS** the state can help ensure that schools provide civil service opportunities

1 for all students through the standards that schools set and the assessments and accountability
2 measures the state chooses;

3 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Task Force on Civics
4 Education is established as a joint task force of the Alaska State Legislature for the purpose of
5 studying the current state of civics education and making recommendations for the
6 improvement of civics education for students in the state; and be it

7 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the duties of the task force include

8 (1) analyzing the current state of civics education in the state;
9 (2) analyzing current civics education laws in other jurisdictions;
10 (3) identifying best practices in civics education in other jurisdictions;
11 (4) studying and making recommendations about how to increase and improve
12 civics education in kindergarten through grade 12 in public schools in the state;

13 (5) making recommendations to the legislature relating to substantially
14 increasing civics literacy and the capacity of youth to obtain the requisite knowledge and
15 skills to be civically informed members of the public;

16 (6) making funding recommendations related to the task force's
17 recommendations to the legislature;

18 (7) submitting a report to the secretary of the senate and the chief clerk of the
19 house of representatives by January 19, 2016, summarizing the findings and recommendations
20 of the task force and notifying the members of the legislature that the report is available; and
21 be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force consists of 12 members as follows:

23 (1) three members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of
24 the house of representatives, including one member of the minority organizational caucus;

25 (2) three members of the senate appointed by the president of the senate,
26 including one member of the minority organizational caucus;

27 (3) the commissioner of education and early development or the
28 commissioner's designee;

29 (4) five members of the public appointed jointly by the speaker of the house of
30 representatives and the president of the senate as follows:

31 (A) one member of the National Education Association who is a

1 teacher with significant teaching experience in civics or social studies education;

2 (B) one member representing the Association of Alaska School
3 Boards;

4 (C) one member who is a student enrolled in good standing in a public
5 high school who will be a senior in the school on the date of the first meeting of the
6 task force; the student must demonstrate an interest in civics education and leadership;

7 (D) one member who is a judge or otherwise represents the judicial
8 branch of state government;

9 (E) one member representing the University of Alaska; and be it

10 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that

11 (1) the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate
12 shall jointly appoint the chair of the task force from among the legislative members of the task
13 force;

14 (2) a majority of the task force constitutes a quorum; a vacancy on the task
15 force shall be filled in the same manner as the original selection or appointment;

16 (3) the task force shall meet at the call of the chair;

17 (4) the task force may request data and other information from the Department
18 of Education and Early Development, school districts, and other state agencies; and be it

19 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the staff of the legislator who chairs the task force shall
20 provide administrative and other support to the task force; and be it

21 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that members of the task force serve without compensation
22 but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized for boards and commissions under
23 AS 39.20.180; and be it

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force expires on June 30, 2016.