

2021 HOUSE EDUCATION

HB 1143

2021 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1143
1/18/2021

Relating to required patriotism projects for public elementary school students; and to provide a report to the legislative management.
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Chairman Owens called the meeting to order at 3:10 PM. **Roll call:** present was Reps. Owens, Schreiber-Beck, Heinert, Hoverson, D. Johnson, M. Johnson, Longmuir, Marschall, Pyle, Richter, Zubke, Hager and Guggisberg, with Rep. Simons absent.

Discussion Topics:

- Patriotism projects
- STEM courses
- Teaching patriotism
- 2022-2023 school year projects
- Youth knowledge

Rep. D. Johnson introduced the bill

Senator Dever , District 32 – Oral testimony

Jim Upgren, Assistant Director of School Approval and Opportunity, NDDPI #1203

Jim Nelson, Legislative Director, ND Veterans Legislative Council, #1089

Aimee Copas, Executive Director NDCEL, #1022

Additional Written testimony: Lonnie Wangen, Depart. of Veterans Affairs, #1204

Chairman Owens Closed the hearing on HB 1143 at 3:45 PM

Bev Monroe, Committee Clerk by Donna Whetham

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1143
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

January 18, 2021

**By: Jim Upgren, Assistant Director, Office of School Approval and Opportunity
701-328-2244**

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Chairman Owens and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Upgren, Assistant Director in the Office of School Approval and Opportunity with the Department of Public Instruction. I am here on behalf of the department to speak in favor of HB 1143.

Article VIII, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution states that “A high degree of intelligence, **patriotism**, integrity and morality on the part of every voter in a government by the people being necessary in order to insure the continuance of that government and the prosperity and happiness of the people, the legislative assembly shall make provision for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools which shall be open to all children of the state of North Dakota and free from sectarian control. This legislative requirement shall be irrevocable without the consent of the United States and the people of North Dakota.” This means that one of the duties of our public school system is to promote patriotism and civic duty.

House Bill 1143 calls for each student to complete at least one patriotism project as part of their experience in elementary school, starting with the 2022-

2023 school year. The topic of each project is the student's choice. The purpose of these projects is to promote civic duty and, through exploration and inquiry, for students to understand the rights and responsibilities of living in a democratic society. These rights and responsibilities include the right to vote, the responsibility to be an informed citizen, and the responsibility to contribute to the betterment of the community. The bill calls for the department to write guidance for the schools regarding standards and implementation of the patriotism project.

In recent years STEM skills (relating to science, technology, engineering, and math) have been prioritized in our educational system. According to a November 2020 study, our schools spend \$54 per student on STEM education, but only 5 cents per student on civics education. While I will not argue that STEM skills are not important (because they are), it is imperative that we fund civics education (which is part of our state constitution) at a higher percentage than one one-thousandth of something that is not listed in our state constitution.

We all know that students living in the 21st Century are no longer satisfied with reading about what others have done or are doing. Rightly so, they are now expecting that they can “do” and practice the things they are learning about. That is how real, long-lasting, and meaningful learning takes place.

Taking an interest in civic duty at a young age will lead to a greater chance that those students will be informed and involved in their communities when they get

older. The purpose of HB 1143 is to encourage students to get involved in their communities, be informed of the issues, and understand their vital role in their communities as citizens. Students must realize that they cannot be only consumers of good government, but must also be good contributors to this state and nation as good citizens.

Not all young people have these opportunities for practice and action. For schools already doing these types of projects, this bill changes nothing, as there is no added burden if these projects are already being done. But passage of this bill will send a clear message to those schools who are not making civics and patriotism an integral part of their teaching that the Legislature and the state of North Dakota expects that schools deliver the expectations of the North Dakota Constitution with the funding provided to all public schools in North Dakota.

Another important piece of HB 1143 is in Section 1 on page 2, lines 1 through 6. This allows NDDPI to work with veteran's and other civic oriented local organizations to support these projects. Often these organizations reach out to NDDPI with an offer to help fund and support student and teacher patriotic activities. This bill would allow us to accept that assistance, and would also allow local school districts to do the same.

Chairman Owens and Members of the Committee that concludes my prepared testimony and I will stand for any questions that you may have.

HB 1143

The ND Veterans Legislative Council is in strong support of this legislation.

Patriotism is the feeling of attachment and commitment to a country, nation, or political community. The United States tends to be a very patriotic country. This patriotism is evidenced during the Fourth of July, when people take to the streets watching parades dressed in red, white, and blue, waving flags. Patriotism is so much more than waving a flag once a year. Children must learn about patriotism if they are to grow into well informed and active citizens.

Research has shown that today's young people do not have a strong sense of patriotism like their grandparents did. While young people still love America. It is hard to ignore the fact, love of country and patriotic values, are not being instilled in children today the way they were years ago.

The future of our way of life and the many freedoms we enjoy starts with patriotism. According to the Department of Defense the number of American citizens who qualify for service under the current standards is quickly decreasing with roughly 71 of 17-24- year-olds that not qualified for service.

When the draft was suspended after the Vietnam War, we assumed that Americans would voluntarily step up and take the oath to defend our country out of a sense of patriotism. This assumption was put the test after the attack on the Twin Towers by terrorists on September 11, 2001. The result was a disappointing reality with only 1 percent of Americans answering the call. Studies have shown that there is a severe disconnect between service in the military of the youth of today putting our country at risk. Surveys taken amongst young people that many have no desire or feel no obligation to serve in uniform. This needs to change, and we believe this bill is a good start towards that change.

In my old fashion view of things, one reason for this is because the abundances of our great nation have distracted us from teaching them how all this abundance became possible. Social Studies classes have been pushed into the backseat to science, math, and technology classes as the importance of S.T.E.M. (Science,

Technology, Engineering and Math) has skyrocketed. Civic Classes are largely a thing of the past. I received my elementary education in rural schools. Every morning we did three things, we gathered around the flagpole and raised the flag, we said the pledge of allegiance, and finally prayed the Our Father. We had a civics class where we learned about the three branches of government, state, and nation, we learned about the Constitution and its Amendments along with our role in being a responsible American.

But we also need to admit that part of the decline in patriotism comes from the “politically correct” culture within our educational system. A recent study commissioned by Stanford University and the University of Washington-Seattle in 2013. This study noted that American public schools have turned away from promoting patriotism. According to the report and I quote “the concept of patriotism itself has become contested in U.S. schools for a number of reasons.” It goes on to explain that those reasons include “the belief that the 21st century students’ affiliation should be to global citizenship and worldwide rights”

That is a real shame!!! Today’s young people are tomorrow’s public servants. They need to understand the greatness of America and the sacrifices that so many have made in the name of our freedom to fully appreciate their blessings.

The United States needs a citizenry that understand such patriotic ideals as the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, the meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance, the Constitution and Amendments, what it means to live in a republic and the meaning for liberty and justice for all.

Many of the organizations I represent have programs focused to instill a sense of patriotism in our young people. These organizations have made it their mission to do so. Starting with the AMVETS and its outreach to K-12 public, private and parochial students with our program called Americanism. This past year we partnered with the 917 Society and distributed close to 10,000 booklets of the Constitution of the United States to all the 8th graders in ND. The Boys and Girls State for junior and senior high school students and an oratorical competition for high school students and the 40 and 8 present American flags along with brochure discussing the significance of the flag. In Cass county an average of 2200 flags are distributed. The VFW has an essay competition Patriots Pen for students in grades 6-8 and the Voice of Democracy an audio/essay competition for high

school students. All these programs are voluntary and have local, state, and national level.

Inspiring a sense of patriotism in our children of all ages and walks of life is the best strategy to ensure a future for our military, national defense, and our country.

Although it would be nice to have this program follow a student into each elementary grade. We are proud to support this legislation and salute the Department of Instruction for seeing the need. Perhaps some-day we will be support a bill resurrecting civics

America needs more red, white, and blue in our schools, not less.

In closing, I'll leave you with this notion...a grade school education with out some knowledge of patriotism is like a medical education with knowledge of antomy

Thank you



1 **HB1143 – Patriotism Projects**

2 **NDCEL Testimony in Support with requested amendments**

3 Chairman Owens, members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me to be here today to
 4 discuss this bill. For the record, my name is Dr. Aimee Copas. I serve as the Executive Director
 5 for the ND Council of Educational Leaders.

6 My personal background argues my support for this bill as well as my request for a small
 7 amendment to the bill to make it more workable for schools. It is worth noting that in requesting
 8 slight amendments to the bill, I spoke to the bill sponsor and he is supportive as well as one of the
 9 co-sponsors of the bill.

10 First of all let's talk about what is good here. As a former teacher, my degree was in English with
 11 a minor in History. In the English courses I taught, in every school I was at, I patterned a method
 12 taught to me by my cooperating teacher who was Jody Foy a former (and I might say AMAZING)
 13 English teacher at Bismarck High School. She too was just as passionate about our student's need
 14 to correctly understand our history so that we might not repeat the mistakes made by those who
 15 came before us and we could replicate their good works. Henceforth our method of teaching was
 16 to partner with the history department and teach items in a co-curricular fashion. For example,
 17 when in History they were learning about the French Revolution, I taught *A Tale of Two Cities*,
 18 when learning about WWII, I taught *Farewell to Manzanar*. If I was still teaching today, during
 19 the times of early settlement to the US, I would teach *The Salem Witch Trials – A Community*
 20 *Under Siege*, and during the American Revolution we'd defiantly read *1776*, by David
 21 McCollough. This method of teaching at the HS level is important. But where the interest in these
 22 times in our history really grows is in elementary.

23 Our ND Elementary teachers, understanding this, appropriately adjusted the Social Studies
 24 standards just a couple of years ago and the work outlined in this bill is appropriately adjusted and
 25 required within the standard.

26 Our standards in ND Specifically state for K-5: *To be a responsible and productive member of*
 27 *today's society, a student needs to have a broad, connected, and useful knowledge of social studies*
 28 *and civics education. A consistent, high-quality social studies education program is essential for*
 29 *all students, providing a foundation for intelligent and precise thinking. Social studies education*
 30 *should also provide every student the opportunity to choose among a full range of future career*
 31 *paths and to contribute to society as an informed and active citizen.*

32 Below is specifically what in Grades K-5 our teachers are to be focusing on while teaching their
 33 coursework in social studies (included below is only one small excerpt from the standard guidance:

*NDCEL is the strongest unifying voice representing and supporting administrators and educational leaders in pursuit of quality education
 for all students in North Dakota.*

Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Assistant Director: Russ Ziegler



K-5 Civics & Government Standards

C.K_2.1 Explain reasons for, and purposes of, rules, laws, and positions of authority.

C.K_2.2 Explain why people form governments.

C.K_2.3 Identify services provided by the local government and how they affect the lives of its citizens/residents. C.K_2.4 Describe the core values represented by symbols of the United States.

C.K_2.5 Identify ways citizens/residents participate in community decisions.

C.K_2.6 Describe important rights and responsibilities of citizens/residents.

C.K_2.7 Explain and/or participate in a project to help or inform others about an issue.

C.3_5.1 Compare and contrast the responsibilities and powers of government officials at various levels and branches of government.

C.3_5.2 Describe the structure of government and how it functions to serve citizens/residents (e.g., Constitution, Amendments, government leaders). C.3_5.3 Describe the structure of government in North Dakota and how it functions to serve citizens/residents. ♦

C.3_5.4 Explain the importance of the basic principles that provide the foundation of the American system of government (e.g., symbols, patriotic traditions, values of liberty, equality, justice, etc.).

C.3_5.5 Describe procedures for making decisions in a variety of settings.

C.3_5.6 Compare and contrast personal and civic responsibilities and explain why they are important in community life. C.3_5.7 Develop and implement an action plan to address or inform others about an issue.

As you can see C.K_2.7 requires what this bill is asking for. That is great. Not only does the bill highlight an important activity, but it also highlights an area in the required standards and helps assure teachers are addressing it. In conversations with school leaders, most all of our schools are already doing this, but this would help ensure that all are abiding by this standard.

This is where we'd ask for a modest adjustment to the bill. In this bill on page 2 , lines 6-10 it outlines sharing of data and a reporting requirement. Those of you who have served in the legislature for a while know that school districts are heavily burdened with reporting requirements and many of them are ones that take significant time to do and translate little relevant data.



#7 asks for evaluation data regarding the projects. The method by which teachers evaluate student work and student scores specific to a course and a project at that level are not data fields shared outside of a school district. That is district level data – not state level data. This should require a data sharing agreement. We'd ask that instead, we treat this particular reporting request to be handled similarly to the Civics Test bill that passed through the legislature a couple sessions ago. That reporting requirement was an assurance that the work was complete that was provided in the STARS system and then communicated with the state. This reporting requirement would not be burdensome and is one that our educational leaders can support.

In #8 the superintendent is to report annually about the projects. School based stories could be requested on a voluntary basis to provide examples of projects. This is not an uncommon practice and one that is done regularly. Often legislative leaders and state leaders are invited to come and see first hand the results of the student's work.

Below is a suggestion of how this amendment could look:

7. Each school district shall provide an assurance of completion of the patriotism project evaluation data to the superintendent of public instruction through the shared student information system. at the time and in the manner requested by the superintendent of public instruction.

8. The superintendent of public instruction shall report annually to the governor and the legislative management regarding the compliance to this section and may provide examples of patriotism projects in school districts.

We thank you for your consideration of this bill and ask that you please pass the amendment and as amended send forth with a do-pass. Thank you for your time.

**House Education Committee
67th Legislative Session
Representative Mark Owens-Chair**

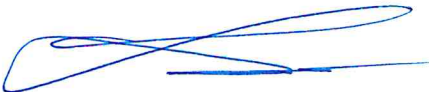
Chairman Owens and House Education Committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 1143. This bill will...

- Provide an opportunity for ND youth to learn first-hand what patriotism is and why it is important for our country to prosper.
- Provide an opportunity for our patriotic organizations to engage with our future generation of leaders and community members.

During this time of increasing social media, opinionated news and the ability to pursued peoples opinions in a way that our country has never before seen it is important that we provide a safe and positive experience for our youth to learn about the community they are a part of. It is important they hear the stories and missions of our patriotic organizations so they can have a better well-rounded experience to base their understanding of what their community members are doing for them. Now more than ever we need to engage our youth so they can understand the effect they can make on their futures and the future of our country. They must understand that patriotism is about supporting our constitution, community, country and our beliefs and empowering our leaders to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration.



Lonnie Wangen

Commissioner-NDDVA

2021 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1143
1/20/2021

Relating to required patriotism projects for public elementary school students; and to provide a report to the legislative management.

Chairman Owens called the meeting to order at 9:21 AM. Roll call: Present were Reps. Owens, Schreiber-Beck, Heinert, Simons, D. Johnson, M. Johnson, Longmuir, Marschall, Pyle, Richter, Zubke, Hager and Guggisberg, and Hoverson

Discussion Topics:

- Request for minor amendment from NDCEL
- Who would control the Patriotism project
- Funding or the Patriotism projects

Rep. D. Johnson made a motion for amendment #21.0405.01002. Seconded by **Rep. Marschall**.

Voice vote: Motion carried to amend HB 1143.

Rep. Guggisberg Moved Do Pass as amended. Seconded by **Rep. Marschall**.

Roll Call Vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Mark S. Owens	Y
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	Y
Representative Ron Guggisberg	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	N
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Jeff A. Hoverson	N
Representative Dennis Johnson	Y
Representative Mary Johnson	N
Representative Donald Longmuir	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Brandy Pyle	Y
Representative David Richter	Y
Representative Luke Simons	N
Representative Denton Zubke	N

Motion carries 9-5-0

Rep. D Johnson will carry the bill.

Chairman Owens Closed the hearing on HB 1143 at (9:56 AM)

Bev Monroe, Committee Clerk by Donna Whetham

qf
1/20/21

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1143

Page 2, line 4, after "organizations" insert "and civic groups"

Page 2, line 6, after "provide" insert "an assurance of completion of the"

Page 2, line 6, remove "evaluation data"

Page 2, line 7, remove "at the time and in the manner requested by the"

Page 2, line 8, replace "superintendent of public instruction" with "through the shared student information system"

Page 2, line 10, after "regarding" insert "compliance under this section and may provide examples of"

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1143: Education Committee (Rep. Owens, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (9 YEAS, 5 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1143 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

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2021 SENATE EDUCATION

HB 1143

2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1143
3/3/2021

Relating to required patriotism projects for public elementary school students; provide a report to the legislative management.
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Chair Schaible opened the hearing at 2:45 PM

Discussion Topics:

- Civic projects
- Supt. of Public Instruction's guidance
- Funding assistance from civic groups
- Student led projects
- Civic education in ND Constitution

Senator	Attendance
Chairman Schaible	P
Senator Elkin	P
Senator Conley	P
Senator Lemm	P
Senator Oban	P
Senator Wobbema	P

Rep D Johnson - Dist 15 - introduced the bill.

Jim Upgren - ND Dept of Public Instruction – testified in support #7058

Dr Aimee Copas - Ex Dir NDCEL – testified in support #7237

Jim Nelson - State AM Vets Commander – testified in support #7187

Rose Christensen - Bismarck- testified in opposition #7336

Additional written testimony:

Lonnie Wangen – support #7079

Adjourned at 3:30 PM

Lynn Wolf, Committee Clerk

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1143
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

March 3, 2021

**By: Jim Upgren, Assistant Director, Office of School Approval and Opportunity
701-328-2244**

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Chairman Schaible and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Upgren, Assistant Director in the Office of School Approval and Opportunity with the Department of Public Instruction. I am here on behalf of the department to speak in favor of HB 1143.

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Taking an interest in civic duty at a young age will lead to a greater chance that those students will be informed and involved in their communities when they get older. Having a society of informed and involved citizens will lead to a higher voter turnout, which in turn will lead to policies and a society that is most reflective of the view of its citizens. The purpose of HB 1143 is to encourage students to get involved

in their communities, be informed of the issues, exercise the right to vote, have their voices heard, and participate in the democratic process.

Chairman Schaible and Members of the Committee that concludes my prepared testimony and I will stand for any questions that you may have.



1 **HB1143 – Patriotism Projects**

2 **NDCEL Testimony in Support with requested amendments**

3 Chairman Schaible, members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me to be here today to
 4 discuss this bill. For the record, my name is Dr. Aimee Copas. I serve as the Executive Director
 5 for the ND Council of Educational Leaders.

6 My personal background argues my support for this bill in the 2000 version amended form as this
 7 version makes it more workable for schools. This amendment was arranged with the bill sponsor
 8 and was supported by the house education committee.

9 First of all, let's talk about what is good here. As a former teacher, my degree was in English with
 10 a minor in History. In the English courses I taught, in every school I was at, I patterned a method
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traditions, values of liberty, equality, justice, etc.).

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As you can see C.K_2.7 requires what this bill is asking for. That is great. Not only does the bill highlight an important activity, but it also highlights an area in the required standards and helps assure teachers are addressing it. In conversations with school leaders, most all of our schools are already doing this, but this would help ensure that all are abiding by this standard.

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Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Assistant Director: Russ Ziegler



1 As you well know, we are very wary of having curriculum dictated in century code – curriculum
2 is to be adopted by local boards and implemented by local teachers and assured by our
3 administrators. This bill simply assures what is currently in our standards is being implemented
4 in each school – an assurance that our administrators can support. However, we would be remiss
5 if we didn't mention how delicately we should tread in the area of dictating curriculum in law, and
6 we thank this committee for always being mindful of that. Thank you and I'd stand for any
7 questions you might have.

*NDCEL is the strongest unifying voice representing and supporting Administrators and educational leaders in pursuit of quality education
for all students in North Dakota.*

Executive Director: Aimee Copas-----Assistant Director: Russ Ziegler

HB 1143

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I am grateful every day for being born in North Dakota and receiving my elementary education in rural schools. Every morning we did three things, we gathered around the flagpole and raised the flag, we said the pledge of allegiance, and I prayed the Our Father. We had a civics class where we learned about the three branches of government, state, and nation, we learned about the Constitution and its Amendments along with our role in being a responsible American. Sadly, this is no longer the case.

Our schools, most of them, do not encourage patriotic feeling. Many of them do not teach the pledge of Allegiance, schools no longer have picture of Lincoln and Washington on their classroom walls, we not longer celebrate their birthdays, rather we lump them all to together on Presidents Day, and our teaching of history has changed. Children are no longer taught about our great history. We do have a history. It's not perfect, but we can learn from the good and not so good aspects of that history. Rather than attempting to erase the not so good we need to teach why for instance slavery and Jim Crow laws are not okay.

Research has shown that today's young people do not have a strong sense of patriotism like their grandparents did. It is hard to ignore the fact, love of country and patriotic values, are not being instilled in children today the way they were years ago. One reason for this is because the abundances of our great nation have distracted us from teaching them how all this abundance became possible. Social Studies classes have been pushed into the backseat to science, math, and technology classes as the importance of S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) has skyrocketed. Civic Classes are largely a thing of the past. But we also need to admit that part of the decline in patriotism comes from the "politically correct" culture within our educational system. A recent study commissioned by Stanford University and the University of Washington-Seattle in 2013. This study noted that American public schools have turned away from promoting patriotism. According to the report and I quote" the concept of

patriotism itself has become contested in U.S. schools for a number of reasons.” It goes on to explain that those reasons include “the belief that the 21st century students’ affiliation should be to global citizenship and worldwide rights.”

That is a real shame!!! Today's young people are tomorrow's leaders. The younger generations have grown up lacking the experiences of struggling and sacrifice like their grandparents. Our grandparents and my generation's parents taught us that nothing is free. It comes with a high price tag and lots of hard work. They need to understand the greatness of America and the sacrifices that so many have made in the of our freedom. Freedom is the hardest thing to attain and the easiest to lose.

The future of our way of life and the many freedoms we enjoy starts with patriotism. According to the Department of Defense the number of American citizens who qualify for service under the current standards is quickly decreasing with roughly 71 of 17-24- year-olds that not qualified for service.

Only 1 percent of Americans answer the call. Studies have shown that there is a severe disconnect between service in the military of the youth of today putting our country at risk. Surveys taken amongst young people that many have no desire or feel no obligation to serve in uniform. This needs to change, and we believe this bill is a good start towards that change.

The United States needs a citizenry that understands such patriotic ideals as the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, the meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance, the Constitution and Amendments, what it means to live in a republic and the meaning for liberty and justice for all.

Inspiring a sense of patriotism in our children of all ages and walks of life is the best strategy to ensure a future for our military, national defense, and our country's many freedoms.

Although it would be nice to have this program follow a student into each elementary grade. We are proud to support this legislation and salute the Department of Instruction for seeing the need. Perhaps some-day we will be support a bill resurrecting civic classes

We believe there are 10 things patriotism will teach young people growing up in America today.

- I. Learning about the pledge of Allegiance. We say it but do we know what it means
- II. What to do during the National Anthem. Besides the obvious a discussion can be had regarding the right to assembly and why some people “Take the Knee”
- III. Honoring our Soldiers. Regardless of whether you agree or not with what they are doing, the simple fact is **They’re willing to die for our rights**. It’s important they learn to respect our soldiers and veterans.
- IV. Our basic freedoms. This is the study of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. This is the decree that allows us all our freedoms and exempts no-one
- V. Our core democratic values. They are central to our democracy and include common good, justice, liberty, popular sovereignty, life, equality, diversity, pursuit of happiness, truth, patriotism, and the rule of law
- VI. How our government works. Explaining the three functions of the three branches of Federal, State, and local governments.
- VII. Our responsibilities as citizens. Ours is a government of the people and by the people, and we need to know that our involvement is crucial to the success of our nation.
- VIII. People and places significant to our history. As I have already stated we need to examine the people and places both good and bad in our nation’s history to understand how became the nation we are.
- IX. Appreciating diversity. We are the melting pot of the world. Our ancestors brought to this country their rich cultures and traditions that makes us who we are. A nation of immigrants.
- X. The lesson for the future. Out of all this what are the outstanding values we need to instill in our children so they can make our country great for years to come. The lessons of **Love, responsibility. and community**.

In closing I would like to quote Red Skelton’s reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance on television January 14, 1969.

I—Me; an individual; a committee of one.

Pledge—Dedicate all of my worldly good to give without self-pity.

Allegiance—My love and my devotion.

To the Flag—Our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom. And wherever she waves, there is respect, because our loyalty has given her dignity that shouts Freedom is everybody's job.

Of the United—that means we have all come together.

States—Individual communities that have united into 48 great states, 48 individual communities with pride, dignity and purpose, all divided by imaginary boundaries, yet united by a common cause, that that's love of country.

And to the Republic—A Republic, a sovereign in which power is invested into the representatives chosen by the people to govern, the government is the people, and its from the people to the leaders not the leaders to the people.

For which it stands one Nation—meaning so blessed by God.

Indivisible—Incapable of being divided.

With Liberty—Which is freedom the right of power for one to live his own life without fears, threats, or any form of retaliation.

And Justice—The principle and qualities of dealing fairly with others.

For All—For all. That means boys and girl, it's as much your country as it is mine.

Thank you.

Testimony on HB 1143 March 3, 2021

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rose Christensen.

I am here today in support of reintroducing a strong patriotic curriculum in our public schools, but, for the most part, I am in opposition to this bill

It is very easy to be enthusiastic about restoring a patriotic curriculum in our elementary schools, but if we take a good look at this bill, we find that not only does this "patriotic projects" bill not do what people think it's going to do, but it actually could result in doing just the opposite. Everything hinges on the definition of patriotism, and there is no definition of "patriotism" in this bill.

Those who testified in favor of this bill in the House obviously reacted emotionally to the use of that word in the bill, without carefully analyzing all the other verbiage. They fixed their attention on this word, and envisioned a return to the time when The school days started with the raising of the flag, the pledge of allegiance, and prayer.

The fact is that none of that is in this bill. The fact is that if you removed the word "patriotism" entirely from this bill, you would find it actually introduces and anchors an often controversial METHOD of teaching in our schools, a method known by various names including "Outcome based education", which, while it continues to capitalize on references to "patriotism" may, in fact, not result in anything even remotely suggestive of the vision these witnesses evoked in their testimony.

The lack of a definition of "patriotism" is the fatal flaw in this proposal. While we old-timers have a very clear understanding of that word, it has been subjected to some pretty rough treatment in recent times. The very term "patriotism" has come under attack from those who espouse a globalist world view and promote a curriculum geared to a socialist, one world perspective at the expense of a basic national interest. Putting one's own nation first is frequently ridiculed as some kind of barbarian jingoism. I fear that unless this Committee amends this bill to

include a solid, traditional definition of patriotism, you will not like what comes of it!

I tried to find an ideal definition of patriotism, and believe me, they vary dramatically. In a review of the new book "Reclaiming Patriotism in an Age of Extremes", author Steven Smith gives us an inkling of what may lie ahead for the modern meaning of patriotism. He starts by reminding us of the famous line from Samuel Johnson that "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." With that unpleasant introduction, he moves on to tell us that patriotism "has come to seem morally questionable." At best it is an "unenlightened preference for one's own at the expense of a more enlightened cosmopolitan point of view." At worst he continued, "patriotism is a primitive sentiment, one tied to nationalism, chauvinism, an aggressive, militaristic mindset, and a desire to dominate other people or at least proclaim the superiority of one's own ways over all others." Wow! Would we want someone of this mind-set teaching "patriotism" In our schools ?

I prefer Kristi Noem's vision of "patriotism". Last weekend at CPAC, she wowed the crowds with this. "Let's always remember: America is good. Freedom is better than tyranny. We are unique. We are exceptional. And no American should ever, ever apologize for that."

So, This Committee MUST agree on a definition of patriotism before you act on this bill.

Having said all that, I want to point out that this bill is NOT about the promotion of a sense of patriotic love for our country. It does not introduce and reemphasize the wonderful things about our country. It might touch on some aspects of what we conceive of as "patriotism", but its main thrust is to promote ACTIVISM. Greta Thunberg type of student ACTIVISM!

Section 1, subsection 1. Defines a "patriotism project" as a "student-led ACTION on a **community issue of the student's choice which is intended to influence the issue positively**, and which requires research and **documentation regarding the process AND OUTCOME of the ACTION taken!**

Clearly, the emphasis here is on the METHOD that will be used to train students to become advocates and community activists. Notice that the research these students will be doing is NOT on history, or civics, or on anything else even remotely connected to instilling a love of country which is what we usually think of when we discuss "patriotism". . The **research and documentation** the student is supposed to engage in **is related to THE PROCESS OF ACTIVATING** (OR SHOULD WE SAY "AGITATING") for a specific OUTCOME on some community issue which the student has decided to "influence positively".

Little johnny may have been influenced to have a negative view of vehicles that run on fossil fuel. He may choose to take on a project on the "community issue" of the construction of a new gas plaza at the edge of town. He may take action to convince some of his classmates to paint their bicycles red, white and blue, and **to protest the construction by blocking the access to the building** site. He will have met all the requirements for having performed a "patriotic project", but since patriotic was never defined in this bill, the only OUTCOME is that the schools and taxpayers have subsidized the development and training of another rabble - rousing community activist.

Section 1b does define "project-based", and admits that it is the teaching METHOD which is the goal. No more deceptive veil of renewing the student's "patriotism". The talk of "knowledge and skills" the student is supposed to acquire through a "student-influenced inquiry process" could relate to anything in the world! Do YOU understand what this is talking about?

The reference to "student-based inquiry process" is an interesting concept. Of course we want students to be inquisitive...to have inquiring minds...but left to themselves they will not advance much beyond the highest level of knowledge already acquired by their group. **The whole purpose of hiring mature, educated teachers is to raise the level of knowledge.** If those who are not yet educated are designated to LEAD others who are not yet educated, will the level of education rise? Again, there is absolutely no reference here to anything even remotely connected to "patriotism."

Subsection 2 simply specifies the beginning date for introduction of a “patriotic project” and provides that it could be integrated with other course curricula. There is no objection to this provision, except that I would substitute the word “unit” for the word “project” which smacks strongly of the “activist” agenda

Starting with Subsection 4, this Bill takes a turn for the worse. It reveals itself as progressively building a new, bigger and potentially more costly and intrusive role for the Department of Public Instruction. Subsection 4 mandates the Superintendent’s guidance regarding “quality standards” for the so-called “patriotism projects”... and how they are to be implemented. One wonders how anyone could provide “quality standards” for “patriotism projects” when there has been no definition of “patriotism”, other than to suggest it is somehow aligned with training community activists and organizers!.

In Section 5, the Superintendent“ may seek assistance from third parties to implement professional development for staff related to project-based patriotism education. “ If you can fight your way through the education jargon, you realize this empowers the SUPT to hire outside “assistance” to intrude on the already busy schedule of schools, teachers, administrators and possibly even school boards to train them in the use of this experimental METHOD. If the schools simply supplemented, or substituted a k-6 patriotism course of study for less important subject matter, ...one that could be integrated with other subjects such as reading or history, it would be a win-win for the local schools , the kids, the parent and the taxpayers.

Section 6 originally specified that only veterans’ groups could donate money to school districts for the furtherance of the “patriotic project curriculum” but it was amended to include unidentified “civic groups” . The Veterans Groups that we are familiar with have done a great work with our Young people outside of school, and have proven they are a good and patriotic influence in our communities. “Civic groups”, however, come and go. They are unidentified in this bill. These unidentified entities have no track record, and I think they should be amended back out of this bill. Since we still don’t know what the intended OUTCOME of

this undefined “patriotism project” is, let’s not open the door to contributions from unknown entities to promote it!

Sections 7 introduces another worrisome feature. Why on earth does the completion of each child’s “patriotism project” have to be communicated to the Supt “through the shared student information system”? What IS the “shared student information system”? Who else is this student information shared WITH? And why? Is this part of a national data base ? AT what point is little Charlie’s personal information part of the public record? What if little Charlie has done a “patriotic project” on his Second Amendment right to keep and Bear Arms? How far and wide will this information spread ? What about Charlie’s right to privacy?

Recently in the news there was a major flap about unrestricted access to photos of little gymnasts . Are pictures of those pretty little faces and graceful bodies more worthy of protection from random gawkers, than the political profiles of your little patriots? I object to this provision in this bill.

Section 8 – Is much ado about something that doesn’t need to be provided for by law. The Governor is free to make a proclamation designating Patriot’s Day at the Capitol, where he could provide an opportunity for schools and individual students to showcase their talents, compete in speech contests, teen quiz bowls, etc. It could feature old-fashioned sing-alongs of old-fashioned campfire songs, talent contest, parades, floats, marching bands, food vendors etc. He would not need advice from the Superintendent of Public Instruction to initiate such a celebration of “patriotism”.

In short, this bill sounds good until you realize it really has nothing to do with rebuilding patriotic sentiment in America. It is about establishing a controversial experimental educational method to train community activists . It is about expanding the role of the Department of Public Instruction which has already FAILED to do its constitutional duty to “impress upon the mind” of our students “the vital importance of truthfulness, temperance, purity, public spirit, and respect for honest labor of every kind.” (Article VIII, Section 3.) It is about empowering the DPI to interfere with the regular operation of our schools by imposing more unnecessary, time-consuming responsibilities on them.

Local school Boards are supposed to be in charge of running local schools. I suggest we let them design or choose a curriculum to implement their own course in patriotism. I suggest that this bill be gutted, and reduced to two sections only: Section one: Define patriotism. Section two: Mandate that k-6 coursework be designed to familiarize elementary students with basic flag etiquette, the pledge of allegiance, the national anthem, the Declaration of Independence and why we celebrate the Fourth of July, the US Constitution, and the basic history and geography of the of the United States.

Article VIII, Section 1 states: "A high degree of intelligence, patriotism, integrity and morality on the part of every voter in a government by the people being necessary in order to insure the continuance of that government and the prosperity and happiness of the people, the legislative assembly shall make provision for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools.

That's why our public schools exist. You are the legislative assembly. You have the authority to eliminate all these middlemen and women, all this administrative fuss and bother, all the costly professional development staff, and to pass a simple law restoring the teaching of patriotism in our schools. Find the best definition of patriotism that you can find. Highlight it in Section one. Mandate it for all elementary schools, and empower the School Boards in those districts to prepare and implement such a curriculum in Section 2. And be done with it.

Thank you.

Senate Education Committee
67th Legislative Session
Senator Donald Schaible-Chair

Chairman Schaible and Senate Education Committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 1143. This bill will...

- Provide an opportunity for ND youth to learn first-hand what patriotism is and why it is important for our country to prosper.
- Provide an opportunity for our patriotic organizations to engage with our future generation of leaders and community members.

During this time of increasing social media, opinionated news and the ability to pursue peoples opinions in a way that our country has never before seen it is important that we provide a safe and positive experience for our youth to learn about the community they are a part of. It is important they hear the stories and missions of our patriotic organizations so they can have a better well-rounded experience to base their understanding of what their community members are doing for them. Now more than ever we need to engage our youth so they can understand the effect they can make on their futures and the future of our country. They must understand that patriotism is about supporting our constitution, community, country and our beliefs and empowering our leaders to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lonnie Wangen

Commissioner-NDDVA

2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

HB 1143
3/16/2021

A BILL relating to required patriotism projects for public elementary school students; and to provide a report to the legislative management.

Chair Schaible called to order at 9:50 AM

Discussion Topics:

- Committee Work

Sen Conley moved a Do Not Pass

Sen Wobbema seconded

Roll Call Vote: 6 – YES; 0 – NO; 0 - ab Motion Passed

Sen Wobbema will carry the bill

Adjourned at 9:58 AM

Lynn Wolf, Committee Clerk

Senator	Attendance
Chairman Schaible	P
Senator Elkin	P
Senator Conley	P
Senator Lemm	P
Senator Oban	P
Senator Wobbema	P

Senator	Vote
Chairman Schaible	Y
Senator Elkin	Y
Senator Conley	Y
Senator Lemm	Y
Senator Oban	Y
Senator Wobbema	Y

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1143, as engrossed: Education Committee (Sen. Schaible, Chairman) recommends
DO NOT PASS (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed HB
1143 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.