



2018 New York State YMCA

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FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: Senate Liberty 1

Bill #:SL-06

Sponsors: Emilia Brandimarte, Lydia Colon, Julianna Uglialoro

An Act To

Amend Article 17, § 801, subsection 3, of the New York State Education Law to add LGBTQ+ history to social studies curriculum.

The People of the State of New York, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:

Purpose

This bill aims to add LGBTQ+ history to all applicable high school history classes in order to make them more inclusive to a diverse range of historical perspectives and create a more accepting environment for marginalized LGBTQ+ students.

Summary of Provisions

Section 1: Definitions

LGBTQ+: individuals who identify themselves with the community of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer individuals.

Section 2

3. The regents shall determine the subjects to be included in such courses of instruction in patriotism, citizenship, and human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery (including the freedom trail and underground railroad), the Holocaust, and the mass starvation in Ireland from 1845 to 1850, a study of the impact of LGBTQ+ individuals throughout history and to the world, including but not limited to the Stonewall riots and the involvement of the United States in the AIDs epidemic; and in the history, meaning, significance and effect of the provisions of the constitution of the United States, the amendments thereto, the declaration of independence, the constitution of the state of New York and the amendments thereto, and the period of instruction in each of the grades in such subjects. They shall adopt rules providing for attendance upon such instruction and for such other matters as are required for carrying into effect the objects and purposes of this section. The commissioner shall be responsible for the enforcement of such section and shall cause to be inspected and supervise the instruction to be given in such subjects. The commissioner may, in his discretion, cause all or a portion of the public school money to be apportioned to a district or city to be withheld for failure of the school authorities of such district or city to provide instruction in such courses and to compel attendance upon such instruction, as herein prescribed, and for a non-compliance with the rules of the regents adopted as herein provided.

Justification

This bill will give students a more diverse and inclusive view of history. The history that we learn in mandatory high school classes usually shape the worldviews of most students well into their



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adult lives, since most people don't look extensively into other perspectives and historical narratives. History as it is taught is extremely subjective; the events and sources that are used can completely change how we look at the world and can define the zeitgeist of an entire generation. Therefore, teaching queer history to a general population by adding it to existing mandatory classes instead of adding it as an elective can foster inclusivity throughout the high school population, and acceptance of queer students by their peers. This will legitimize the queer struggle to outsiders, as well as making students confront preconceived biases that they may have about the queer community by proving that alternate identities have always existed. In addition, it will legitimize queerness to queer students themselves who have internalized bigotry or are unwilling to accept their identities. Queer history isn't passed down familially, so this is also a way to preserve history that is often lost due to lack of legitimization as a field and visibility. By bringing alternate views of history into light, students straight and queer alike will receive a perspective that they may not have considered looking into themselves.

Fiscal Implications

This bill will require the additional training of teachers on how to teach this new material and the optional purchase of new textbooks. This bill won't necessitate the addition of any new teachers, classes, or school time.

Effective Date

This law will go into effect on January 1, 2024.