**South Carolina General Assembly**

121st Session, 2015-2016

**A52, R83, S437**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senators Campsen, Reese, Gregory, Hutto, Cleary, Campbell, Cromer, Young, Bryant, Williams, Bennett, Johnson, Hembree, O'Dell, Davis, Fair, Hayes and Verdin

Document Path: l:\council\bills\ms\7098ahb15.docx

Companion/Similar bill(s): 3539

Introduced in the Senate on February 10, 2015

Introduced in the House on April 14, 2015

Last Amended on May 27, 2015

Passed by the General Assembly on May 28, 2015

Governor's Action: June 3, 2015, Signed

Summary: James B. Edwards Civics Education Initiative

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

2/10/2015 Senate Introduced and read first time ([Senate Journal‑page 5](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\02-10-15.docx))

2/10/2015 Senate Referred to Committee on **Education** ([Senate Journal‑page 5](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\02-10-15.docx))

3/17/2015 Senate Committee report: Favorable with amendment **Education** ([Senate Journal‑page 11](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\03-17-15.docx))

3/18/2015 Senate Committee Amendment Adopted ([Senate Journal‑page 33](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\03-18-15.docx))

3/24/2015 Senate Amended ([Senate Journal‑page 24](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\03-24-15.docx))

3/26/2015 Senate Read second time ([Senate Journal‑page 25](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\03-26-15.docx))

3/26/2015 Senate Roll call Ayes‑44 Nays‑0 ([Senate Journal‑page 25](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\03-26-15.docx))

3/31/2015 Senate Read third time and sent to House ([Senate Journal‑page 15](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\03-31-15.docx))

4/14/2015 House Introduced and read first time ([House Journal‑page 33](file:///h:\HJ%20Archive\2015\04-14-15.docx))

4/14/2015 House Referred to Committee on **Education and Public Works** ([House Journal‑page 33](file:///h:\HJ%20Archive\2015\04-14-15.docx))

5/21/2015 House Recalled from Committee on **Education and Public Works** ([House Journal‑page 24](file:///h:\HJ%20Archive\2015\05-21-15.docx))

5/27/2015 House Amended ([House Journal‑page 33](file:///h:\HJ%20Archive\2015\05-27-15.docx))

5/27/2015 House Read second time ([House Journal‑page 33](file:///h:\HJ%20Archive\2015\05-27-15.docx))

5/27/2015 House Roll call Yeas‑100 Nays‑0 ([House Journal‑page 35](file:///h:\HJ%20Archive\2015\05-27-15.docx))

5/28/2015 House Read third time and returned to Senate with amendments ([House Journal‑page 15](file:///h:\HJ%20Archive\2015\05-28-15.docx))

5/28/2015 Senate Concurred in House amendment and enrolled ([Senate Journal‑page 63](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2015\05-28-15.docx))

6/2/2015 Ratified R 83

6/3/2015 Signed By Governor

6/8/2015 Effective date 06/03/15

6/9/2015 Act No. 52

View the latest [legislative information](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=437&session=121&summary=B) at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[2/10/2015](file:///p:\pprever\2015-16\437_20150210.docx)

[3/17/2015](file:///p:\pprever\2015-16\437_20150317.docx)

[3/18/2015](file:///p:\pprever\2015-16\437_20150318.docx)

[3/24/2015](file:///p:\pprever\2015-16\437_20150324.docx)

[5/21/2015](file:///p:\pprever\2015-16\437_20150521.docx)

[5/27/2015](file:///p:\pprever\2015-16\437_20150527.docx)

(A52, R83, S437)

**AN ACT TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑29‑240 SO AS TO ENACT THE “JAMES B. EDWARDS CIVICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE”, TO DEFINE THE TERM “CIVICS TEST”, TO REQUIRE ALL STUDENTS OF PUBLIC OR CHARTER SCHOOLS IN THIS STATE TO TAKE THE CIVICS TEST PRODUCED BY THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES AS PART OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REQUIRED CREDIT, TO ALLOW SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO RECOGNIZE STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE A PASSING GRADE ON THE TEST, TO DIRECT THE RESPECTIVE SCHOOLS TO REPORT RESULTS TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE FOR INCLUSION IN THE REPORT CARD FOR EACH SCHOOL, TO PROVIDE NO SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY CHARGE A FEE FOR THE TEST, AND TO PROVIDE THAT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION APPLY TO ANY STUDENT ENTERING THE NINTH GRADE BEGINNING WITH THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR.**

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

**Citation**

SECTION 1. This act may be cited as the “James B. Edwards Civics Education Initiative”.

**Civics test required, definition, requirements and procedures for test**

SECTION 2. Article 1, Chapter 29, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑29‑240. (A) For purposes of this section, ‘civics test’ means the one hundred questions that, as of January 1, 2015, and updated accordingly, officers of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services use in order that the applicants can demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of United States history and the principles and form of United States government, as required by 8 U.S.C. 1423.

(B) As part of the high school curriculum regarding the United States government required credit, students are required to take the civics test, as defined in subsection (A), provided there is no cost to a school or school district for obtaining and giving the test, but are not required to obtain a minimum score. However, a student who receives a passing grade, as determined by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, or better, may be recognized by the school district. This requirement applies to each student enrolled in a public or charter school in this State. This requirement does not apply to a student who is exempted in accordance with the student’s individualized education program plan.

(C) Each public school, including charter schools, must report the percentage of students at or above the designated passing score on the test to the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee which must then include such on the school report card.

(D) No school or school district of this State may impose or collect any fees or charges in connection with this section.

(E) This section must be applied to any student entering ninth grade beginning in the 2016‑2017 school year.”

**Severability clause**

SECTION 3. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

**Time effective**

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

Ratified the 2nd day of June, 2015.

Approved the 3rd day of June, 2015.

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