**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**H. 3452**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Reps. Burns, Chumley, Beach, Pope and Cromer

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Introduced in the House on January 10, 2023

Currently residing in the House

Summary: Celebrate Freedom Week

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

12/8/2022 House Prefiled

12/8/2022 House Referred to Committee on **Education and Public Works**

1/10/2023 House Introduced and read first time ([House Journal‑page 173](h:\hj\20230110.docx))

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4/26/2023 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Cromer

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/08/2022](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/3452_20221208.docx)

A bill

to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by adding Section 59‑29‑33 so as to observe “Celebrate Freedom Week” in South Carolina public schools, to designate a certain week in September for this annual observation week, to provide specific requirements for the observation week, and to provide related implementation requirements for the State Department of Education and State Board of Education.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 29, Title 59 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

Section 59‑29‑33. (A) To educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country and the values on which this country was founded, the week in which September seventeenth falls annually is designated as “Celebrate Freedom Week” in public schools. For purposes of this subsection, Sunday is considered the first day of the week. The South Carolina Department of Education, in cooperation with other state agencies or private entities who voluntarily participate, shall promote Celebrate Freedom Week through a coordinated program.

(B)(1) Not later than December 31, 2024, the State Board of Education shall adopt rules requiring each social studies class to include, during Celebrate Freedom Week or during another full school week as determined by the district board of trustees, appropriate instruction concerning the original intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, in their historical contexts. The religious references in the writings of the founding fathers shall not be censored. The rules must provide for the study of the Declaration of Independence to include the study of the relationship of the ideas expressed in that document to subsequent American history, including the relationship of its ideas to the rich diversity of our people as a nation of immigrants, the American Revolution, the formulation of the United States Constitution, and the abolitionist movement, which led to the Emancipation Proclamation and the women's suffrage movement.

(2) In adopting rules under item (1), the State Board of Education shall for each school district:

(a) require that, during Celebrate Freedom Week or other week of instruction prescribed under item (1), students in grade levels three through twelve study and recite the historical text, “We hold these Truths to be self evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed”; and

(b) excuse from the recitation in subitem (a) a student:

(i) whose parent or guardian submits to the district a written request that the student be excused;

(ii) who, as determined by the district, has a conscientious objection to the recitation; or

(iii) who is the child of a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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