

1 State of Arkansas
2 88th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2011

SR 22

4
5 By: Senator Elliott

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7 **SENATE RESOLUTION**

8 SUPPORTING THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY IN OUR SCHOOLS.

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11 **Subtitle**

12 SUPPORTING THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY IN
13 OUR SCHOOLS.

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16 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
17 STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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19 WHEREAS, geographic factors assume greater importance as the world's
20 economies, societies, and political structures grow more global in scale; and

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22 WHEREAS, the economic stature and competitiveness of the United States
23 require increasingly sophisticated levels of geographic knowledge and mastery
24 of geographic tools; and

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26 WHEREAS, a lack of geographic knowledge may constitute a serious,
27 perhaps critical, disadvantage in an increasingly competitive world; and

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29 WHEREAS, geographic literacy is increasingly a matter of national
30 security; and

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32 WHEREAS, United States Department of Labor data identifies geospatial
33 technology as one (1) of the three (3) fastest growing employment fields
34 serving industries such as insurance, banking, real estate, forestry, and
35 agriculture as well as federal, state, and local governments; and



1 WHEREAS, the National Academy of Sciences urges creation of a national
2 program to improve the geographic competence of the United States' general
3 population and the school age population; and
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5 WHEREAS, the more we know about our planet, its natural environments,
6 other peoples, cultures, political systems economies, borders, boundaries,
7 attitudes, and aspirations, the better prepared we will be for the
8 challenging times ahead; and
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10 WHEREAS, geographers assist decision-makers by providing information
11 and analyses related to such issues as the management of hazards, management
12 of complex urban systems, and resource allocation; and
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14 WHEREAS, a geographic understanding is necessary in water resource
15 management, retail marketing, national energy policy, economic restructuring
16 and competitiveness, technological hazards, floodplain policy, and hunger;
17 and
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19 WHEREAS, only sixty-seven percent (67%) of students in the United
20 States can find Louisiana on a United States map and fifty-two percent (52%)
21 can find Mississippi; and
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23 WHEREAS, fifty percent (50%) of the students in the United States
24 cannot find New York state, even though it is the third most populous state
25 in the nation after California and Texas; and
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27 WHEREAS, eighty-eight percent (88%) of students in the United States
28 cannot find Afghanistan on a map of Asia; and
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30 WHEREAS, sizeable percentages of students in the United States do not
31 know that Sudan and Rwanda are in Africa (54% and 40% answer incorrectly,
32 respectively); and
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34 WHEREAS, seventy percent (70%) of students in the United States cannot
35 find North Korea on a map, and sixty-three percent (63%) do not know its
36 border with South Korea is the most heavily fortified in the world; and

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WHEREAS, the inclusion of geography as a discrete course in our schools' curricula has been increasingly diminished or altogether excluded,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Senate supports the improvement and expansion of geographic literacy among kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) students to ensure that they are capable of understanding how humans interact with the environment, how Arkansas is connected nationally and globally, and how important it is that the state prepares itself to compete successfully in the global economy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after adoption of this resolution, an appropriate copy shall be forwarded to the Department of Education by the Secretary of the Senate.