

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 971

To direct the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture to conduct a study on Black history education efforts in public elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 9, 2023

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN (for herself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NADLER, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CARSON, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL

To direct the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture to conduct a study on Black history education efforts in public elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Black History Matters
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. STUDY AND REPORT ON BLACK HISTORY EDU-**
2 **CATION.**

3 (a) STUDY.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—During the period described
5 in paragraph (2), the Director of the National Mu-
6 seum of African American History and Culture (re-
7 ferred to in this Act as the “Director”) shall conduct
8 a study on Black history education efforts in public
9 elementary and secondary schools.

10 (2) PERIOD.—The Director shall, with respect
11 to the study required under paragraph (1)—

12 (A) begin such study not later than 180
13 days after the date of the enactment of this
14 Act; and

15 (B) complete such study not later than 3
16 years after the date of the enactment of this
17 Act.

18 (b) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the study under sub-
19 section (a), the Director shall—

20 (1) identify States and local educational agen-
21 cies that require Black history education as part of
22 the curriculum taught in public elementary and sec-
23 ondary schools;

24 (2) identify States and local educational agen-
25 cies that do not require Black history education as

1 part of the curriculum taught in public elementary
2 and secondary schools;

3 (3) assess the quality of Black history edu-
4 cation provided by public elementary and secondary
5 schools, including through the qualitative and quan-
6 titative analysis of such indicators as—

7 (A) in-class discussion;

8 (B) educational activities conducted out-
9 side the classroom, including homework assign-
10 ments; and

11 (C) project based learning;

12 (4) assess the types and quality of instructional
13 materials used to teach students about Black his-
14 tory;

15 (5) examine the duration and comprehensive-
16 ness of any Black history-related courses or lessons
17 provided by public elementary and secondary
18 schools; and

19 (6) analyze the approaches used by such schools
20 to assess students' knowledge of Black history, in-
21 cluding the use of traditional and nontraditional as-
22 sessments.

23 (c) REPORT.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the completion of
25 the study under subsection (a), the Director shall

1 prepare and submit to Congress a report on the re-
2 sults of the study.

3 (2) DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL.—The report
4 required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not
5 later than 180 days after the completion of the
6 study under subsection (a)(2)(B).

7 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

8 (1) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary
9 school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary
10 school”, and “State” have the meanings given those
11 terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
12 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

13 (2) BLACK HISTORY.—The term “Black his-
14 tory” means the study and stories of Black life in
15 the United States and around the world, with a spe-
16 cific focus on the triumphs and struggles (including
17 political, social, and cultural achievements) of Afri-
18 can Americans throughout the United States.

19 (3) BLACK HISTORY EDUCATION.—The term
20 “Black history education” means educational activi-
21 ties that are specifically intended—

22 (A) to improve students’ awareness and
23 understanding of the history of people of Afri-
24 can descent, especially as it relates to United
25 States history;

1 (B) to educate students on the lessons of
2 chattel slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow laws,
3 and the Civil Rights movement as a means to
4 raise awareness about the importance of pre-
5 venting genocide, hate, and bigotry against any
6 group of people; and

7 (C) to study the history of racism, its deep
8 historical roots, the use of discrimination and
9 propaganda that target the Black people, and
10 the evolving nature of white supremacy over
11 time.

12 (4) PROJECT BASED LEARNING.—The term
13 “project based learning” means a teaching method
14 through which students learn by actively engaging in
15 real-world and personally meaningful projects.

○