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TEACH DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE PREAMBLE

House Bill 4280

Sponsor: Rep. Robert Gosselin

Committee: Education

Complete to 2-16-01

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4280 AS INTRODUCED 2-15-01

House Bill 4280 would amend the Revised School Code to encourage school faculty to teach students the preamble to the Declaration of Independence and emphasize its importance in United States history.

The bill specifies that the board of a school district, or the board of directors of a public school academy, would be encouraged to provide in each public school classroom, in grades 3 to 12, before the beginning of each day, an oral recitation of the following excerpt from the Declaration of Independence:

“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...”

The bill also would encourage the school or public school academy to establish in its curriculum a study of the meaning and importance of the statement quoted above in its 18th century context, including at least the relationship of the statement’s ideas to the American revolution, to the formulation of the United States Constitution, and to subsequent U.S. history.

House Bill 4280 (2-16-01)

Analyst: J. Hunault

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.