

INITIATIVE 285

I, Sam Reed, Secretary of State of the State of Washington and custodian of its seal, hereby certify that, according to the records on file in my office, the attached copy of Initiative Measure No. 285 to the Legislature is a true and correct copy as it was received by this office.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring the teaching of the relationship of
2 the Declaration of Independence to the constitutions of the United
3 States and Washington state; amending RCW 28A.230.170; adding a new
4 section to chapter 28A.230 RCW; and creating new sections.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **LEGISLATIVE INTENT**

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The Declaration of Independence makes it
8 clear "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their
9 Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life,
10 Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights,
11 Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from
12 the consent of the governed"

13 The Washington state Constitution echoes the Declaration of
14 Independence. The preamble states: "We the people of the state of
15 Washington, grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for our
16 liberties, do ordain this constitution." Then Article 1, section 1
17 states: "All political power is inherent in the people, and
18 governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed,

1 and are established to protect and maintain individual rights." The
2 schools have neglected to teach this principle.

3 We the People want to give our children and their children's
4 children the blessings of liberty. Schools must teach the relationship
5 of the Declaration of Independence to United States and Washington
6 state constitutions for this to happen. This is not a religion or a
7 separation of church and state issue. The issue is teaching the
8 substance and meanings of the liberties protected by the United States
9 and Washington state constitutions as outlined by the Declaration of
10 Independence.

11 **POLICIES AND PURPOSES**

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Prior to this act, RCW 28A.230.170 stated:
13 "The study of the Constitution of the United States and the
14 Constitution of the state of Washington shall be a condition
15 prerequisite to graduation from public and private high schools of this
16 state." However, the courts have ruled "any study constitutes study."
17 Therefore, the superintendent of public instruction has left it up to
18 the teacher. Our schools are teaching the "mechanics" of government
19 but they have not taught the "foundation" of government. They teach
20 about human rights. But have not taught the source of those rights as
21 identified in the Declaration of Independence and the Washington state
22 Constitution. This act requires public and private schools to teach
23 the relationship of the Declaration of Independence to the
24 constitutions of the United States and Washington state and display
25 these documents on school property.

26 **RELATING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**
27 **TO THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**

28 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.170 and 1985 c 341 s 1 are each amended to
29 read as follows:

30 ((The study of)) Schools shall teach the relationship of the
31 Declaration of Independence to the Constitution of the United States
32 and the Constitution of the state of Washington ((shall be)) as a
33 condition prerequisite to graduation from the public and private high
34 schools of this state. The state board of education acting upon the
35 advice of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide by

1 rule ((~~or regulation~~)) for the implementation of this section into the
2 K-12 social studies curriculum. Local school boards shall provide
3 books that explain the meaning and substance of the Declaration of
4 Independence, and the constitutions of the United States and the state
5 of Washington. Local school boards shall ensure that each school
6 conspicuously display copies of the Declaration of Independence, the
7 Bill of Rights, the United States Constitution, and the Washington
8 state Constitution.

9 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 The word "teach" in RCW 28A.230.170 requires:

12 (1) Illustrating, by teacher instruction, how the Declaration of
13 Independence provided the outline for both the United States
14 Constitution and the Washington state Constitution;

15 (2) Relating sections of the Washington state Constitution to
16 statements made in the Declaration of Independence and the United
17 States Constitution;

18 (3) Teaching the heritage and meaning of this statement from the
19 Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident,
20 that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator
21 with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty,
22 and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, governments
23 are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent
24 of the governed." Suggested sources are: The Magna Carta (1215), the
25 1628 Petition of Right to King Charles I, the writings of Sir Edward
26 Coke (1552-1634), John Locke (1632-1704), the Spirit of Laws (1748) by
27 Charles De Montesquieu, and Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780);

28 (4) Teacher instruction on The Northwest Ordinance, which sets the
29 requirements for states to join the union, shall be required. Emphasis
30 shall be placed on teaching the educational intent of the founding
31 fathers as presented in Article 3 of the Northwest Ordinance, which
32 states: "Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good
33 government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of
34 education shall forever be encouraged ...";

35 (5) Teaching the heritage and meaning of the religious freedom
36 statement of Article I, section 11 of the Washington state
37 Constitution. Suggested student readings include: Thomas Jefferson's
38 "Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom" (1786), and James Madison's

1 "Memorial and Remonstrance." The purpose of this instruction is to
2 illustrate the struggle for obtaining "absolute freedom of conscience
3 in all matters of religious sentiment ..." as stated in Article I,
4 section 11 of the Washington state Constitution;

5 (6) Requiring that students be encouraged to memorize the preamble
6 of the United States Constitution along with the preamble and Article
7 I, section 1 of the Washington state Constitution;

8 (7) Requiring that students read and be taught George Washington's
9 first inaugural address and his farewell address; Abraham Lincoln's
10 first inaugural address, and Lincoln's Gettysburg address for their
11 advice in supporting and defending the United States Constitution;

12 (8) Testing, including state standardized testing, on the meanings
13 of the constitutions and on the meaning of such words as: Tyrant,
14 despotism, providence, consanguinity, rectitude, endowed, unalienable,
15 created equal, tranquility, posterity, ordain, blessings,
16 licentiousness, and "law of nature" as defined in the 1828 edition of
17 Webster's Dictionary;

18 (9) Displaying the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights,
19 preamble to the United States Constitution, and the preamble and the
20 first twelve sections of the Washington state Constitution with a note
21 stating: "For the complete text of the Washington state Constitution
22 go to the school library"; and

23 (10) Illustrating, with teacher instruction, the relationship of
24 the "Pledge of Allegiance to the United States" to the Declaration of
25 Independence and the Washington state Constitution (the preamble,
26 Article I, section 1, and Article I, section 11). This instruction
27 shall be taught at the time the "Pledge of Allegiance" is taught.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Part headings used in this act are not any
29 part of the law.

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