

# HB540 INTRODUCED



1 HB540  
2 XDUYFZ7-1  
3 By Representatives Mooney, Yarbrough  
4 RFD: Education Policy  
5 First Read: 03-Mar-26



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

SYNOPSIS:

This bill would establish the American History and Civics Excellence Initiative within the State Department of Education.

This bill would provide for an online course of study on American history and civics that high school teachers may complete in order to receive the American History and Civics Seal of Excellence Endorsement and, subject to appropriation, a one-time stipend.

This bill would authorize the State Superintendent of Education to appoint, and the Senate to confirm, a program director.

This bill would also require the State Board of Education to oversee the initiative and adopt rules.

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

Relating to teacher endorsements; to create the American History and Civics Excellence Initiative; to provide for the appointment and confirmation of a program director; to provide for an online course of study that high school teachers may complete to qualify for the American History and



## HB540 INTRODUCED

29 Civics Seal of Excellence Endorsement; to provide for a  
30 one-time stipend, subject to appropriation; and to require the  
31 State Board of Education to adopt rules.

32 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

33 Section 1. (a) For the purposes of this section, the  
34 following terms have the following meanings:

35 (1) BOARD. The State Board of Education.

36 (2) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Education.

37 (3) ENDORSEMENT. The American History and Civics Seal  
38 of Excellence Endorsement.

39 (4) INITIATIVE. The American History and Civics  
40 Excellence Initiative.

41 (5) TEACHER. A high school teacher who holds a valid  
42 Alabama Teacher Certificate issued by the department.

43 (b) (1) The American History and Civics Excellence  
44 Initiative is created within the department. The initiative  
45 shall consist of an online course of study that takes a  
46 minimum of 50 educational hours to complete.

47 (2) The course of study shall address topics,  
48 including, but not limited to, the following:

49 a. The philosophical underpinnings of the American  
50 Republic and the root foundation of American exceptionalism.

51 b. The success of the United States and the success or  
52 failure of other nations' governing philosophies to evaluate  
53 their past, present, and likely future effects.

54 c. The value of civic pride and regular participation  
55 by citizens in government.

56 d. The rights and responsibilities of citizens,



## HB540 INTRODUCED

57 including the process of advocating properly with government  
58 officials.

59 (c) The State Superintendent of Education shall  
60 appoint, subject to confirmation by the Senate, a program  
61 director within the department. The program director shall  
62 direct and manage the initiative in compliance with this  
63 section.

64 (d) (1) The State Superintendent of Education shall  
65 develop, and the State Board of Education shall approve, the  
66 American History and Civics Seal of Excellence Endorsement  
67 subject to the requirements of this section.

68 (2) A teacher who completes the online course of study  
69 is eligible for the endorsement. Upon successful completion of  
70 the course of study, the teacher may submit an application to  
71 the program director to add the American History and Civics  
72 Seal of Excellence Endorsement to his or her valid Alabama  
73 Teacher Certification.

74 (3) Each teacher who successfully completes the course  
75 of study and receives the endorsement may also submit an  
76 application to the program director for a one-time stipend of  
77 three thousand dollars (\$3,000). The program director shall  
78 review each application, confirm that the teacher has  
79 completed the course of study and received the endorsement,  
80 and, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, facilitate  
81 the awarding of the stipend.

82 (4) Any monies appropriated shall be budgeted and  
83 allotted pursuant to the Budget Management Act in accordance  
84 with Article 4, commencing with Section 41-4-80 of Chapter 4



## HB540 INTRODUCED

85 of Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975, and only in the amounts  
86 provided by the Legislature in the general appropriations act  
87 or other appropriations act.

88 (e) (1) The board shall oversee the initiative and adopt  
89 rules to implement and administer this section.

90 (2) The board shall develop separate application forms  
91 that a teacher must complete to: (i) receive the endorsement;  
92 and (ii) receive the stipend.

93 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October  
94 1, 2026.