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H.B. No. 2497

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment and duties of the Texas 1836 Project.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subtitle D, Title 4, Government Code, is amended  
by adding Chapter 451 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 451. TEXAS 1836 PROJECT

Sec. 451.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "1836 Project" means the advisory committee  
established under this chapter.

(2) "Patriotic education" includes the:

(A) presentation of the history of this state's  
founding and foundational principles;

(B) examination of how this state has grown  
closer to those principles throughout its history; and

(C) explanation of why commitment to those  
principles is beneficial and justified.

(3) "State agency" means a department, commission,  
board, office, or other agency in the executive branch of state  
government that is created by the constitution or a statute of this  
state.

Sec. 451.002. ESTABLISHMENT. (a) The 1836 Project is  
established as an advisory committee to promote patriotic education  
and increase awareness of the Texas values that continue to  
stimulate boundless prosperity across this state.

1       (b) The 1836 Project is composed of nine members. The  
2 governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of  
3 representatives shall each appoint three members. The appointees  
4 may include persons in the private sector with relevant experience  
5 or subject matter expertise.

6       (c) Members serve two-year terms and may not be removed  
7 except for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance.

8       (d) The governor shall appoint one member of the 1836  
9 Project as the presiding officer.

10       (e) The presiding officer shall:

11               (1) convene regular meetings of the 1836 Project; and

12               (2) coordinate and direct the activities of the 1836  
13 Project.

14       Sec. 451.003. DUTIES. (a) The 1836 Project shall:

15               (1) promote awareness among residents of this state of  
16 the following as they relate to the history of prosperity and  
17 democratic freedom in this state:

18                       (A) Texas history, including the indigenous  
19 peoples of this state, the Spanish and Mexican heritage of this  
20 state, Tejanos, the Texas War for Independence, annexation of Texas  
21 by the United States, the Christian heritage of this state, this  
22 state's heritage of keeping and bearing firearms in defense of life  
23 and liberty and for use in hunting, and Juneteenth;

24                       (B) the founding documents of this state;

25                       (C) the founders of this state;

26                       (D) state civics; and

27                       (E) the role of this state in passing and

1 reauthorizing the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.  
2 Section 10101 et seq.), highlighting:

3 (i) President Lyndon B. Johnson's signing  
4 of the act;

5 (ii) President George W. Bush's 25-year  
6 extension of the act; and

7 (iii) Congresswoman Barbara Jordan's  
8 successful efforts to broaden the act to include Spanish-speaking  
9 communities;

10 (2) advise the governor on the core principles of the  
11 founding of this state and how those principles further enrich the  
12 lives of its residents;

13 (3) facilitate the development and implementation of  
14 the Gubernatorial 1836 Award to recognize student knowledge of  
15 Texas Independence and other items listed in Subdivisions  
16 (1)(A)-(D);

17 (4) advise state agencies with regard to their efforts  
18 to ensure patriotic education is provided to the public at state  
19 parks, battlefields, monuments, museums, installations, landmarks,  
20 cemeteries, and other places important to the Texas War for  
21 Independence and founding of this state, as appropriate and  
22 consistent with applicable law; and

23 (5) facilitate, advise on, and promote other  
24 activities to support public knowledge of and patriotic education  
25 on the Texas War for Independence and founding of this state, as  
26 appropriate and consistent with applicable law.

27 (b) In carrying out its duties under Subsection (a)(2), the

1 project may solicit statements and contributions from intellectual  
2 and cultural figures.

3 Sec. 451.004. FUNDING; COMPENSATION. (a) The Texas  
4 Education Agency shall provide funding and administrative support  
5 for the 1836 Project, including for the pamphlets described by  
6 Section 451.005, to the extent funds are available for those  
7 purposes.

8 (b) A member of the 1836 Project is not entitled to  
9 compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for the travel  
10 expenses incurred by the member while transacting project business,  
11 as provided by the General Appropriations Act.

12 Sec. 451.005. PAMPHLET. Not later than September 1, 2022,  
13 the 1836 Project shall provide a pamphlet to the Texas Department of  
14 Public Safety that explains the significance of policy decisions  
15 made by this state that promote liberty and freedom for businesses  
16 and families. The contents must include:

- 17 (1) an overview of Texas history and civics;  
18 (2) the legacy of economic prosperity in this state;  
19 and  
20 (3) the abundant opportunities for businesses and  
21 families in this state.

22 Sec. 451.006. REPORT. (a) Not later than September 1,  
23 2022, the 1836 Project shall prepare and produce a written report  
24 that includes:

- 25 (1) a description of the activities of the project;  
26 (2) the findings and recommendations of the project;  
27 (3) a plan that identifies the best method of carrying

1 out the duties under Sections 451.003(a)(1), (4), and (5);  
2 (4) any proposals for legislation; and  
3 (5) any other matter the project considers  
4 appropriate.

5 (b) Subsequent to the report required under Subsection (a),  
6 the 1836 Project may prepare and produce additional reports the  
7 project considers appropriate.

8 (c) The Texas Education Agency shall make a report described  
9 by this section available to the public on the agency's Internet  
10 website.

11 (d) To the extent existing agency resources are available  
12 for this purpose, the Texas Education Agency may provide to the 1836  
13 Project any agency resources necessary to prepare or produce a  
14 report described by this section.

15 Sec. 451.007. ABOLITION; EXPIRATION. The 1836 Project is  
16 abolished and this chapter expires September 1, 2036.

17 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 521, Transportation Code,  
18 is amended by adding Section 521.013 to read as follows:

19 Sec. 521.013. TEXAS 1836 PROJECT PAMPHLET. (a) The  
20 department shall provide the pamphlet described by Section 451.005,  
21 Government Code, to persons who receive a driver's license:

22 (1) after applying under Section 521.144; or  
23 (2) with an expiration provided by Section  
24 521.271(a-2) or (a-3).

25 (b) The department shall make the pamphlet described by  
26 Section 451.005, Government Code, available to the public on the  
27 department's Internet website.

1           SECTION 3. As soon as possible after the effective date of  
2 this Act, the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of  
3 the house of representatives shall make the appointments to the  
4 1836 Project under Section 451.002, Government Code, as added by  
5 this Act.

6           SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.