

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2273
By: Oliverson
Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Polling reported by the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation shows that an increasing percentage of Americans—particularly young Americans—favorably view socialism and communism. This increase represents a failure of our educational system to teach our young people about the horrors of communism. According to *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*, an estimated 100 million people have died at the hands of communist regimes. Providing for instruction regarding the horrors of communism to the foundational curriculum in Texas may help students better understand how this political ideology is contrary to the founding principles of freedom and democracy of the United States. C.S.H.B. 2273 provides for the adoption of state curriculum standards that develop a student's understanding of political ideologies, such as communism and totalitarianism, that conflict with the principles of freedom and democracy essential to the founding principles of the United States.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2273 amends the Education Code to require the State Board of Education, in adopting the state curriculum standards for the foundation curriculum, to adopt, as appropriate, standards that develop each student's understanding of political ideologies, such as communism and totalitarianism, that conflict with the principles of freedom and democracy essential to the founding principles of the United States. The bill applies beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2273 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute omits provisions that were present in the introduced that required the State Board of Education to do the following:

- in adopting the state curriculum standards for the foundation curriculum, adopt, as appropriate, standards that develop each student's understanding of the student's shared rights and responsibilities as a resident of Texas;
- in adopting state curriculum standards for the social studies curriculum, adopt standards that develop the following:
 - each student's understanding of the civic-minded expectations of an upright and desirable citizenry that recognizes and accepts responsibility for preserving and defending the blessings of liberty inherited from prior generations and secured by the U.S. Constitution; and
 - each student's ability to advocate effectively before governing bodies and officials; and
- adopt oral history resources to be used by public school districts in instruction in the state curriculum standards for the foundation curriculum and the social studies curriculum that provide portraits in patriotism based on the personal stories of diverse individuals who demonstrate civic-minded qualities, including first-person accounts of victims of other nations' governing philosophies who can compare those philosophies with the governing philosophies of the United States.