

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 24
By: Campbell
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Polling data from the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation and YouGov polling data indicate that, while 81 percent of Americans have unfavorable feelings about communism and 59 percent of Americans have negative feelings about socialism, younger generations are increasingly receptive to collectivist ideologies. The bill sponsor has informed the committee that this concerning trend suggests a critical failure in historical education, leaving students inadequately informed about the oppressive nature and human rights abuses committed under communist regimes. S.B. 24 seeks to address this gap in educational content by requiring Texas schools to provide a comprehensive education on the history, tactics, and consequences of communism. This curriculum includes examining historical events such as the Venezuelan Crisis, the Cultural Revolution in China, and Cuba's Communist Regime, as well as victim testimonies relating to those events. By contrasting these regimes with the founding principles of the United States, the bill aims to foster critical thinking and counter the normalization of communism.

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

S.B. 24 amends the Education Code to require the State Board of Education (SBOE), as appropriate, in adopting statewide curriculum standards for the social studies curriculum for each grade level from grade 4 through grade 12, to adopt standards that develop each student's understanding of communist regimes and ideologies and include age appropriate and developmentally appropriate instruction with information on the following:

- the history of and tactics used by communist movements in the United States;
- historical events and atrocities attributable to communist regimes, including the following:
 - the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward;
 - the Holodomor, otherwise known as the Ukrainian Famine;
 - the Soviet-era political purge known as the Great Terror;
 - the Cambodian genocide under Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge;
 - the origins and policies of the Communist Party of Cuba;
 - communist guerrilla movements in Latin America; and

- the oppression and suffering experienced by people living under communist regimes, including mass murder, violent land seizures, show trials, concentration camps, forced labor, poverty, and general economic deterioration;
- a comparative analysis of the following:
 - the ideologies of communism and totalitarianism contrasted with the United States' founding principles of freedom and democracy; and
 - collectivist ideologies contrasted with the United States' founding principles of individual rights, merit-based advancement, and free enterprise;
- modern threats to the United States and its allies posed by communist regimes and ideologies;
- common economic, industrial, and political events that historically precede communist revolutions;
- the evolution of communist ideologies from economic, class-based theories into broader cultural movements that divide societies and maintain collective control over individual rights;
- common historical and modern methods used to spread communist ideologies, including propaganda, public shaming tactics, censorship, and forced conformity; and
- first-person accounts, in the form of in-person, video-recorded, or written testimony, from the victims of communist regimes.

S.B. 24, with respect to the statewide curriculum standards that the SBOE is required to adopt under the bill's provisions, sets out the following provisions:

- requires the SBOE to adopt and publish standards for the required instruction;
- requires the SBOE to seek input from victims of communism willing to share their first-person accounts and from nationally recognized organizations dedicated to commemorating victims of communism; and
- authorizes the SBOE to incorporate material from existing educational programs that provide instruction on the topic of communist regimes and ideologies, if the material meets the standards adopted by the SBOE.

The bill applies beginning with the 2026-2027 school year. The bill requires the SBOE, not later than July 31, 2026, to review and revise, as needed, the statewide social studies curriculum standards as required by the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025.