

Senate Bill 683

Sponsored by Senator FREDERICK (at the request of Jeff Wihtol) (Pre-session filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Requires school districts to provide instruction on racist history of this country and state. Directs State Board of Education to adopt requirements for instruction.

Directs Department of Education to convene advisory group for purposes of assisting State Board of Education in adopting requirements for instruction on racist history and recommending curricula.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to instruction on racist history; and declaring an emergency.

3 Whereas the first slaves from Africa were brought to North America in 1619, beginning a
4 400-year history of racism toward Black Americans; and

5 Whereas slavery influenced the foundation of law in this country, the United States Constitu-
6 tion, and was a cornerstone of such racist laws as the Fugitive Slave Act and Jim Crow Laws; and

7 Whereas the economy of this country was built on slavery and Black Americans continued to
8 feel the effects of slavery after slavery ended, including the practices of freeing all slaves except for
9 convicted prisoners, convict leasing and sharecropping; and

10 Whereas the Reconstruction Era brought increased civil rights for Black Americans, but Black
11 Americans continued to experience racial segregation in the military, schools and public places; and

12 Whereas slave patrols transitioned to police forces and the justice system continues to be
13 tainted by racism, including racial profiling by police, racially discriminatory drug offense penalties,
14 mass incarceration, police brutality disproportionately harming Blacks and other inequities in our
15 judicial system for poor Black Americans compared to affluent whites; and

16 Whereas racism shaped society in this country, including the flight of Blacks into Canada, the
17 American Colonization Society and white terrorist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK);
18 and

19 Whereas Black Americans have been disenfranchised of the right to vote through poll taxes,
20 literacy tests, intimidation and gerrymandering; and

21 Whereas this country has experienced massacres of Black Americans, including the massacres
22 that occurred in Wilmington, Springfield, Tulsa, Ocoee and Rosewood; and

23 Whereas communities of Black Americans have been targeted and destroyed, such as Seneca
24 Village; and

25 Whereas Black Americans have been subjected to lynching, racial discrimination in employment
26 and housing, involuntary medical experimentation and sterilization, eugenics, redlining,
27 discriminatory federal housing financing and denial of GI Bill benefits; and

28 Whereas the racist history that is specific to this state includes early constitutional provisions,
29 the lynching of Alonzo Tucker in Coos Bay, white supremacist activities in Oregon, the role in

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 Oregon of the largest KKK chapter west of the Mississippi, school segregation, housing discrimi-
 2 nation, redlining and segregated housing in Vanport; and

3 Whereas the racist history of this country and this state have ongoing consequences for Black
 4 Americans; and

5 Whereas by knowing and understanding our past can we learn from our mistakes and build a
 6 better future; now, therefore,

7 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

8 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section, “racist history” means:**

9 **(a) The history of acts and policies in the American colonies and the United States since**
 10 **1619 that have been racist toward Black Americans; and**

11 **(b) The past and ongoing consequences and impacts of racist acts and policies upon Black**
 12 **Americans.**

13 **(2) As an integral part of social studies standards for public school students in**
 14 **kindergarten through grade 12, each school district must provide instruction on the racist**
 15 **history of this country and state.**

16 **(3) The State Board of Education shall adopt requirements for the instruction on racist**
 17 **history. The requirements shall be designed to:**

18 **(a) Prepare students to confront the immorality of this country’s racist history and to**
 19 **reflect on the causes and manifestations of that racist history;**

20 **(b) Provide students with opportunities to contextualize and analyze patterns of racist**
 21 **policies and acts of this country;**

22 **(c) Prepare students to identify racist policies and acts and to formulate corresponding**
 23 **anti-racist policies and acts;**

24 **(d) Educate students on specific policies and acts comprising the racist history of this**
 25 **country;**

26 **(e) Educate students on the history of discrimination against Black Americans in this**
 27 **state;**

28 **(f) Educate students on the cumulative socioeconomic impact upon Black Americans and**
 29 **Black communities of the uninterrupted succession of racist acts and policies of this country**
 30 **and the causes and extent of the vast disparity of wealth between white and Black house-**
 31 **holds; and**

32 **(g) Explore the various mechanisms of transitional and restorative justice that would**
 33 **help Black Americans move forward in the aftermath of racist history.**

34 **(4) To assist school districts in providing instruction on racist history, the Department**
 35 **of Education shall:**

36 **(a) Provide technical assistance to school districts; and**

37 **(b) Identify appropriate curricula on racist history.**

38 **(5) The State Board of Education may adopt any rules necessary for the administration**
 39 **of this section.**

40 **SECTION 2. (1) Section 1 of this 2021 Act becomes operative on July 1, 2022.**

41 **(2) Each school district of this state shall provide instruction on racist history, as de-**
 42 **scribed in section 1 of this 2021 Act, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.**

43 **(3) Notwithstanding the operative date set forth in subsection (1) of this section, the**
 44 **State Board of Education and Department of Education may take any action before the op-**
 45 **erative date set forth in subsection (1) of this section that is necessary to enable the board**

1 and department to exercise, on and after the operative date set forth in subsection (1) of this
 2 section, all of the duties, functions and powers conferred on the board and department by
 3 section 1 of this 2021 Act and to enable school districts to provide instruction on racist his-
 4 tory beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

5 **SECTION 3.** (1) The Department of Education shall convene and consult with an advisory
 6 group for the purposes of:

7 (a) Recommending to the State Board of Education requirements related to the instruc-
 8 tion on racist history, as described in section 1 of this 2021 Act.

9 (b) Recommending to the Department of Education appropriate curricula to provide in-
 10 struction on racist history. To the greatest extent practicable, the advisory group shall re-
 11 commend curricula that is available at no cost. The advisory group may recommend
 12 temporary curricula to ensure that school districts provide instruction on racist history be-
 13 ginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

14 (2) The advisory group convened under this section shall consist of:

15 (a) One or more members who specialize in existing and available curricula, standards
 16 and benchmarks for teaching racist history to students in kindergarten through grade 12;

17 (b) Three members who are historians, including at least two members who are Black
 18 historians and who are recognized as experts on racist history;

19 (c) One member who is a professor of racist history who teaches at a post-secondary
 20 institution of education in this state; and

21 (d) One member who is an expert of racist history.

22 (3) The department shall determine the number and frequency of meetings to be held by
 23 the advisory group under this section.

24 (4) Advisory group members are not entitled to compensation or reimbursement for ex-
 25 penses and serve as volunteers on the advisory group.

26 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this 2021 Act is repealed on December 31, 2022.

27 **SECTION 5.** (1) The Department of Education shall convene the advisory group described
 28 in section 3 of this 2021 Act no later than November 15, 2021.

29 (2) The advisory group shall make the recommendations described in section 3 (1) of this
 30 2021 Act no later than April 15, 2022.

31 (3) The State Board of Education shall adopt requirements for the instruction on racist
 32 history as provided by section 1 of this 2021 Act no later than July 15, 2022.

33 **SECTION 6.** This 2021 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
 34 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2021 Act takes effect
 35 on its passage.

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