

Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing in support of SB 683. It's long past time for our schools to teach the real history of our country, so that we can begin to heal from it and work towards a better future.

Some unfortunate facts of our country are that it was founded on the genocide of Native people and built on the backs of enslaved people. I was not taught this when I was in school. I learned that our country fought a Civil War over slavery and the good guys won. There is so much wrong with the way I was taught because that was not the end of it and even as I was being taught those things, I was watching the cycle of Black people in the US demanding equal rights play out in the 1960s, a cycle that has been repeated many times in our country. I did not yet realize that it was a cycle, one that would continue to be repeated, as I saw again in the 1990s following the Rodney King verdict and again last summer across the country with the Black Lives Matter movement. My child, my grandchild, and I took notice of the fact recently that each of us has witnessed a major movement for civil rights, justice, and equal treatment in all areas of life for Black Americans during our childhoods and yet we still aren't there. ??I believe that's because people don't know the full and true history fo the United States.

I had the good fortune to be able to travel to Germany a few years back. In Germany, the citizens know that the Holocaust was wrong and that their government perpetrated that wrong. They have been taught about it in school. Heroes of the Nazi Resistance are lifted up in monuments while monuments to the Third Reich have been removed, only to be viewed in the context of a museum. Germany has begun to heal from the pain that its powerful government caused because they faced those wrongs and decided to make change into the future. They did not white wash their past, pretend it didn't really happen, or that it wasn't really that bad, Nor do they pretend that it is all over and done and there is nothing that modern Germans can really do about it, since they weren't actually there when it happened. They guard their democracy carefully from the resurgence of Nazi ideology.

We must know what our history is before the can change the trajectory of our future. I'd like for my great grandchildren not to experience their generational event of Black Americans demanding yet again to be treated like equal human beings. We need to know how we got here in order to figure out how not to keep circling back over the same path. Please support this bill. ??

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