
SENATE BILL 5557

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Chase, Hasegawa, Nelson, Fraser, McAuliffe, Shin, Kline, and Murray

Read first time 02/04/13. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to instruction on the Universal Declaration of
2 Human Rights in Washington state schools; adding a new section to
3 chapter 28A.230 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that as World War II
6 was drawing to a close in 1946, the world was ready to reaffirm faith
7 in fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human
8 person. The United Nations formed a commission on human rights that
9 undertook the creation of the first global expression of rights to
10 which all human beings are inherently entitled. The commission was
11 chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt and its membership was broadly
12 representative of the global community. After nearly two years of
13 drafting and one last long night of debate, the president of the United
14 Nations general assembly called for a vote on the final text. Forty-
15 eight nations voted in favor; eight abstained; none dissented. The
16 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was thus adopted in 1948. It is
17 the most recognized and often cited human rights document in the world.

18 The intention of the United Nations commission on human rights was
19 to draft and pass the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and widely

1 promote education about this great document. As stated by the
2 declaration: "Now, therefore, the General Assembly Proclaims this
3 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of
4 achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every
5 individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration
6 constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote
7 respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures,
8 national and international, to secure their universal and effective
9 recognition and observance"

10 The legislature finds that the simple yet powerful idea enshrined
11 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that all human beings are
12 born free and equal in dignity and rights must be promoted and made
13 widely known through education.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 School districts are encouraged to implement a program at least
17 once a year that educates students on the content and importance of the
18 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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