GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1989 SESSION

CHAPTER 370
SENATE BILL 109

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE TEACHING OF THE NATION'S FOUNDING AND RELATED DOCUMENTS IN THE NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOLS.

Whereas, the adoption of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the signing of the United States Constitution were principal events in the history of the United States, the Declaration of Independence providing the philosophical foundation on which this nation rests and the Constitution of the United States providing its structure of government; and

Whereas, the Federalist Papers embody the most eloquent and forceful argument made in support of the adoption of our republican form of government; and

Whereas, these documents stand as the foundation of our form of democracy providing at the same time the touchstone of our national identity and the vehicle for orderly growth and change; and

Whereas, many Americans lack even the most basic knowledge and understanding about the history of our nation and the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence, codified in the Constitution and defended in the Federalist Papers; and

Whereas, the survival of the republic requires that our nation's children, the future guardians of its heritage and participants in its governance, have a firm knowledge and understanding of its principles and history; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 115C-81 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(g) Civic Literacy.

(1) Local boards of education shall require during the high school years the teaching of the nation's founding and related documents, which shall include at least the major principles in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

(2) Local boards of education shall require that high school students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nation's founding and related documents in order to receive a certificate or diploma of graduation from high school.

(3) Local boards of education shall include among the requirements for graduation from high school a passing grade in all courses that include primary instruction in the Declaration of Independence, the United

States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

(4) The State Board of Education shall require that any curriculum-based tests developed and administered statewide beginning with academic year 1990-91 include questions related to the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

(5) The State Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of education, as appropriate, shall establish curriculum content and provide for teacher training to ensure that the intent and provisions of this subsection are carried out. The curriculum content established shall include a review of the contributions made by Americans of all races during the period in which our nation was founded."

Sec. 2. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall submit a biennial report to the General Assembly on the implementation of this act.

Sec. 3. This act is effective upon ratification and shall apply beginning with academic year 1990-91.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 21st day of June, 1989.