Federal Memo of Support

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

TO: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives

FROM: Brian Kanarek

DATE: November 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Support for H.R. , the Civic Literacy and Service Act

We urge you to co-sponsor the Civic Literacy and Service Act, a landmark bill designed

to ensure that all young Americans have the practical skills and opportunities to become

engaged, effective citizens.

This bill is the vital sister bill to H.J.Res. 23, the 28th Amendment. H.J.Res. 23 provides

the right to vote at age 16. The Civic Literacy and Service Act provides the readiness to exercise

that right with confidence.

THE PROBLEM: A READINESS GAP IN AMERICAN CIVICS

As Congress moves to empower 16 and 17 year olds with the franchise, we face a

corresponding readiness gap.

A Practical Skills Deficit: High school civics often focuses on abstract theory, failing to

teach the practical, day to day laws that govern a citizen's life. Graduates are entering adulthood

without knowing how to read a lease, understand an employment contract, or navigate the

consumer credit system.

A Service Deficit: National service, a proven pathway for civic engagement, remains inaccessible to millions. Current federal law bars non citizens, including DACA recipients and lawful residents and those without a high school diploma from participating in AmeriCorps.

#### THE SOLUTION: A TWO PILLAR FRAMEWORK

The Civic Literacy and Service Act pairs the right with the readiness through two common sense, constitutionally sound titles.

# TITLE I: THE CIVIC LITERACY GRANT PROGRAM

This title establishes a voluntary formula grant program that respects the 10th Amendment. It incentivizes states to adopt a foundational curriculum in practical legal literacy.

A Rule of Construction explicitly forbids the federal government from mandating any curriculum.

# TITLE II: THE NATIONAL CIVIC CORPS (The AmeriCorps for All)

This title creates a new, voluntary service corps that removes the citizenship and diploma barriers, making service accessible to all U.S. residents, 16 or older, and providing a scholarship for that service.

This bill is protected by a Trust Fund, a Contingency Clause to protect it from agency abolition, and a Severability Clause, to protect it from lawsuits. It provides the tools for citizenship, honors the 10th Amendment, and creates an inclusive engine for service. We encourage you to support this vital legislation.

Federal Bill (H.R)
119th CONGRESS, 2nd Session
H. R
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
November 18, 2025
Mr for himself, Ms, Mr introduced the
following bill, which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in
addition to the Committee on, for a period to be subsequently determined by the
Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the
committee concerned.
A BILL
To establish a National Center for Foundational Legal Literacy, to create a national
formula grant program, to establish a National Civic Corps, and for other purposes.
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in
Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. TITLE. This Act may be cited as the "Civic Literacy and Service Act."
SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE. The Congress finds the following:
(1) The proposed 28th Amendment to the Constitution H.J.Res. 23 rightfully extends the right to
vote to citizens sixteen years of age or older.
(2) To ensure this right is exercised with confidence and understanding, the Nation must commit
to providing all young Americans with the readiness to engage.

(3) This readiness is built upon two pillars: foundational knowledge of the laws and systems that

govern daily life, and a culture of service that connects individuals to their communities.

- (4) Existing national service programs, while successful, contain eligibility barriers that prevent all residents from participating.
- (5) The purpose of this Act is to pair the right with the readiness by (A) incentivizing states to adopt foundational civic and legal literacy programs, and (B) establishing a new, voluntary National Civic Corps that is accessible to all residents.
- (6) Service to the Nation is the ultimate expression of allegiance, and those who serve, regardless of status, demonstrate the character required for permanent membership in our American community.

# TITLE I - CIVIC LITERACY

# SEC. 101. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR FOUNDATIONAL LEGAL LITERACY.

- (a) ESTABLISHMENT. There is established within the Department of Education a "National Center for Foundational Legal Literacy" hereinafter referred to as the "Center."
- (b) DIRECTOR. The Center shall be headed by a Director, who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Education.
- (c) DUTIES. The Center shall:
- (1) administer the formula grant program established under section 102;
- (2) serve as a national clearinghouse for high-quality, non-partisan curriculum and best practices for foundational legal literacy, in consultation with the National Constitution Center, the State Bar Associations, and other relevant non-partisan organizations;
- (3) provide technical assistance to State and local educational agencies on the implementation of such programs;

- (4) conduct the reporting as required by section 304; and
- (5) develop and disseminate public facing materials to conduct national outreach on foundational legal literacy and the service opportunities provided by the National Civic Corps.

#### SEC. 102. FOUNDATIONAL LEGAL LITERACY GRANT PROGRAM.

- (a) ALLOTMENT. From the amounts deposited into the Trust Fund under section 302, the Secretary, acting through the Director of the Center, shall allocate to each State educational agency that submits an application under section 103 an amount that bears the same relation to the total funds as the population of individuals aged 16 through 18 in such State bears to the total population of such individuals in all States.
- (b) MINIMUM ALLOTMENT. No State receiving a grant under this section shall receive less than 0.5 percent of the total amount allotted under subsection (a).

# SEC. 103. STATE APPLICATIONS.

A State educational agency desiring an allotment under this Title shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require. Such application shall, at a minimum, describe a plan to:

- (1) develop or adopt a high quality curriculum in foundational legal literacy;
- (2) provide professional development and training for teachers and administrators on the implementation of such curriculum; and
- (3) integrate the curriculum into existing social studies, economics, or other courses as a graduation requirement or as a qualifying component for a State's Seal of Civic Readiness.

#### SEC. 104. USE OF FUNDS.

A State educational agency shall use allotted funds to:

- (1) create and disseminate the curriculum described in Section 105;
- (2) provide subgrants to local educational agencies for implementation;
- (3) provide teacher training and resources; and
- (4) conduct assessments to measure student proficiency in the subjects.

# SEC. 105. CURRICULUM CONTENT.

The curriculum developed or adopted under this Title shall include, but not be limited to, instruction on the following:

- (1) The rule of law and the structure of the state and federal judiciary.
- (2) The essential elements of a binding contract.
- (3) Consumer law, including warranties, deceptive practices, and credit.
- (4) The fundamental rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.
- (5) Employment and labor law, including the legal differences between an employee and an independent contractor, at will employment, and workplace rights.
- (6) The basic steps of the civil and criminal justice process.
- (7) Jurisdictional Competence: The constitutional distinction between Federal, State, and Local authority.

# TITLE II - NATIONAL CIVIC CORPS

SEC. 201. AMENDMENT TO NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT OF 1990.

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12571 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end, the following new **PART IV: NATIONAL CIVIC CORPS.** 

# SEC. 134. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CIVIC CORPS.

- (a) ESTABLISHMENT. There is established a program to be known as the National Civic Corps, to be administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service.
- (b) PURPOSE. The purpose of the National Civic Corps is to provide all residents of the United States with an opportunity to perform service in their communities to meet critical local needs, including in education, public health, environmental stewardship, and community development.

#### SEC. 135. ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICE.

- (a) IN GENERAL. Notwithstanding any other provision of law governing the programs of the Corporation, an individual shall be eligible to serve in the National Civic Corps if such individual: (1) is a resident of the United States, (2) is at least sixteen years of age.
- (b) BARRIERS REMOVED. For the purposes of this subtitle, an individual shall not be required to: (1) be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States or (2) possess a high school diploma or its equivalent. (c) SAFETY STANDARDS. Nothing in this Part shall be construed to waive the National Service Criminal History Check requirements. The Corporation shall ensure that all participants, regardless of citizenship or educational status, undergo rigorous screening to protect the safety of the communities they serve.

#### SEC. 136. TERMS OF SERVICE AND BENEFITS.

A participant in the National Civic Corps shall:

- (1) serve a term of service as determined by the Corporation, not to exceed one year;
- (2) receive a living allowance and other benefits, such as health care, during the term of service;
- (3) be eligible to receive a national service educational award authorized under 42 U.S.C. 12603 upon successful completion of the term.

# TITLE III GENERAL PROVISIONS

# SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

- (1) CENTER. The term "Center" means the National Center for Foundational Legal Literacy established under section 101.
- (2) CORPORATION. The term "Corporation" means the Corporation for National and Community Service.
- (3) SECRETARY. The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education.
- (4) STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY. The term "State educational agency" has the meaning given in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

# SEC. 302. CIVIC LITERACY AND SERVICE TRUST FUND.

- (a) ESTABLISHMENT. There is hereby established in the Treasury of the United States a trust fund to be known as the "Civic Literacy and Service Trust Fund," hereinafter referred to as the "Trust Fund," consisting of such amounts as may be appropriated or credited to the Trust Fund as provided in this section.
- (b) EXPENDITURES. Amounts in the Trust Fund shall be available to the Secretary and the Corporation, without further appropriation, to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(c) TRANSFERS TO FUND. There are hereby appropriated to the Trust Fund amounts equivalent to the amounts authorized to be appropriated under section 303.

# SEC. 303. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

They are authorized to be appropriated to the Trust Fund established in section 302 such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2032.

#### SEC. 304. ANNUAL REPORTING TO CONGRESS.

Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the following reports shall be submitted to the relevant committees of Congress:

- (1) The Director of the Center shall submit a report detailing the implementation of the grant program under Title I, including a summary of State level curriculum and any data on student learning outcomes.
- (2) The Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation shall submit a report detailing the implementation of Title II, including the number of participants, the demographic data of those participants (with specific regard to age and resident status), and a summary of post service outcomes.

#### SEC. 305. TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY AND CONTINUATION OF PROGRAM.

(a) CONTINUATION. All provisions of this Act, including the establishment of the Center and the Trust Fund, shall remain in full force and effect regardless of any future reorganization or termination of the Department of Education.

(b) TRANSFER. In the event that the Department of Education is terminated or its functions substantially reorganized, all authorities, duties, personnel, assets, and unexpended balances of the Center and the Trust Fund shall be transferred to a successor agency as designated by the President, or by a subsequent Act of Congress, to ensure the uninterrupted continuation of the programs authorized by this Act.

# SEC. 306. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize the Secretary of Education, the Director of the Center, or any officer of the Federal Government to:

- (1) prescribe, define, or mandate any specific, detailed curriculum, standards, or instructional content for any State, local educational agency, or school; or
- (2) exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any State, local educational agency, or school.

# SEC. 307. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act and the application of the provision to any other person or circumstance shall not be affected thereby.