STATE OF NEW YORK

4411

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 14, 2017

Introduced by Sen. AVELLA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to adding the Armenian Genocide to the list of courses covered in instruction of patriotism, citizenship and human rights issues

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Subdivisions 1 and 3 of section 801 of the education law, as amended by chapter 574 of the laws of 1997, are amended and a new subdivision 6 is added to read as follows:

1. In order to promote a spirit of patriotic and civic service and obligation and to foster in the children of the state moral and intellectual qualities which are essential in preparing to meet the obligations of citizenship in peace or in war, the regents of The University of the State of New York shall prescribe courses of instruction in patriotism, citizenship, and human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide **(including the Armenian Genocide)**, slavery (including the freedom trail and underground railroad), the Holocaust, and the mass starvation in Ireland from 1845 to 1850, to be maintained and followed in all the schools of the state. The boards of education and trustees of the several cities and school districts of the state shall require instruction to be given in such courses, by the teachers employed in the schools therein. All pupils attending such schools, over the age of eight years, shall attend upon such instruction.

3. The regents shall determine the subjects to be included in such courses of instruction in patriotism, citizenship, and human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide **(including the Armenian Genocide)**, slavery (including the freedom trail and underground railroad), the Holocaust, and the mass starvation in Ireland from 1845 to 1850, and in the history, meaning, signif-

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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icance and effect of the provisions of the constitution of the United States, the amendments thereto, the declaration of independence, the constitution of the state of New York and the amendments thereto, and the period of instruction in each of the grades in such subjects. They shall adopt rules providing for attendance upon such instruction and for such other matters as are required for carrying into effect the objects and purposes of this section. The commissioner shall be responsible for the enforcement of such section and shall cause to be inspected and supervise the instruction to be given in such subjects. The commissioner may, in his discretion, cause all or a portion of the public school money to be apportioned to a district or city to be withheld for failure of the school authorities of such district or city to provide instruction in such courses and to compel attendance upon such instruction, as herein prescribed, and for a non-compliance with the rules of the regents adopted as herein provided.

6. The regents shall not approve any course that purports to deny the occurrence of the Holocaust and Armenian Genocide as defined in section two of this title.

§ 2. Section 2 of the education law is amended by adding three new subdivisions 25, 26 and 27 to read as follows:

25. Armenian Genocide. The term "Armenian Genocide" means the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately one million five hundred thousand Armenians by the Ottoman Turkish Empire and its collaborators.

26. Genocide. The term "genocide" means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, such as: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about its destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; or forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

27. Holocaust. The term "Holocaust" means the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jewish people and five million other individuals by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

§ 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.