

Our Civic Mission: Ask Congress to Support the Sandra Day O'Connor Civic Learning Act

Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools

Representatives Tom Cole (R-OK) and Mike Honda (D-CA) have introduced HR 3464, the "Sandra Day O'Connor Civic Learning Act," in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Act calls on the National Assessment Governing Board to provide disaggregated (or state level) data from the National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEPs) in Civics and History; the Act establishes a competitive grant program for civic learning at the U.S. Department of Education, stressing innovation and serving currently under-served school populations.

The Act is designed to be either folded into the eventual re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) or to be a stand-alone Bill. Similar legislation is being contemplated in the U.S. Senate, where a competitive grant program for civic learning is part of the "Harkin-Enzi" ESEA re-authorization Bill passed by the Senate.

The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools strongly endorses this legislation and calls on all who care about the civic mission of our nation's schools to contact their representatives and urge them to support HR 3464. Provision of the state level data from the NAEPs in Civics and History will allow the states to judge how well their schools are meeting their civic mission. Civic learning needs a small competitive grant program to spur innovation, promote successful learning strategies and to develop teaching strategies and programs to meet the needs of currently under-served (in civic learning) school populations.

Representatives Cole and Honda have sent a 'Dear Colleague' letter to every member of the House inviting them to become co-sponsors of HR 3464. You can help the Sandra Day O'Connor Act become law by contacting your House member and asking him or her to sign onto the Act. More information is available at www.civicmissionofschools.org.

It is most appropriate that this important legislation be named in honor of Justice O'Connor. Justice O'Connor has devoted much of her time since taking Senior Status on the Court to strengthening and improving civic learning for every student in the nation. The Justice serves with former representative Lee Hamilton as co-chair of the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools National Advisory Committee. O'Connor founded the very popular and engaging iCivics online civic learning program (www.icivics.org). She and Congressman Hamilton are the most eloquent and effective advocates for civic learning.

It is interesting to note that in these hyper-partisan times a very competent Republican and a very competent Democrat have come together and agreed that improving civic learning is something members from both parties can and should support.

For more information, visit www.civicmissionofschools.org.

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Confirmed speakers

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