

Chairman Mortimer and Members of the Committee:

My name is Brenda Miller. I am the Regional Director for Northwest Professional Educators in Idaho. We have approximately 1,000 members in Idaho.

All our members were eligible to take our internal poll on education issues and nearly 20 percent participated. Primarily an organization of K-12 teachers, our survey represents the views of individual classroom teachers across Idaho.

Seventy one percent of our survey respondents support requiring high school students to pass a test on 100 basic facts of U.S. history and civics from the United States Citizenship Civics Test as a condition for graduation.

Some teachers do not support requiring more tests, are concerned there may be hidden costs, or they support use of the test in classes, but not as a graduation requirement. However, our survey revealed that most teachers believe that this is, in fact, a reasonable requirement which will lead to greater understanding of and engagement in our republican form of government.

They support the aim of this bill which is to ensure all students are taught basic civics about how our government works and who we are as a nation so that they are better prepared for active, engaged citizenship.

As a 7/8 grade teacher, I used the citizenship test as an introduction to my U.S. History and Immigration units. I found it led to increased student interest, a deeper understanding of the inner workings of our government, and raised awareness of the value of informed and active citizenship.