

- SUBJECT:** Emphasizing democratic principles in the public school curriculum
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Bohac, Deshotel, Gooden, K. King, Koop, Meyer, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- 1 present not voting — Dutton
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Mark Wiggins, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Marlene Lobberecht, League of Women Voters of Texas; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Jim Reaves, Texas Farm Bureau; Ellen Arnold, Texas PTA; Pat Brooks; Thomas Parkinson; Kimberly Saldivar; Raul Saldivar)
- Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ryan Valentine, Texas Freedom Network)
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency; Aicha Davis)
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code, sec. 28.002 provides curriculum requirements for public school students in kindergarten through grade 12, established by the State Board of Education (SBOE). Section 28.002(h) states that a primary purpose of the public school curriculum is to prepare thoughtful, active citizens who understand the importance of patriotism and can function productively in a free enterprise society with appreciation for the basic democratic values of our state and national heritage.
- Observers suggest that public school curricula should foster the study of the democratic principles underlying the United States government.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1291 would require the State Board of Education (SBOE) and each

school district, in order to accomplish the primary purpose of the public school curriculum, to ensure that:

- the public school curriculum emphasized an understanding of the principles underlying the United States form of government, including the study of the Founding Fathers of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Federalist Papers; and
- each historical event addressed in the public school curriculum met a reasonable standard of historical significance, in relation to the limited amount of available instructional time.

The bill also would require that the SBOE's list of instructional materials contain material consistent with the purpose and guidelines provided by the bill. This requirement would apply to instructional materials adopted by the SBOE on or after September 1, 2018.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2017, and would apply beginning with the 2017-18 school year.