

CHAPTER 259**(HB 254)**

AN ACT relating to geography education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 157 IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) *The General Assembly hereby finds that:*
 - (a) *The decline in geographic literacy has been widely recognized;*
 - (b) *Geographic knowledge is essential to social, political, and environmental leadership potential and civic involvement; and*
 - (c) *Support should be given to local efforts to restore geography education to the school curriculum, train teachers, prepare teaching materials, and raise public awareness of the importance of geography education.*
- (2) *The General Assembly establishes, on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth, a goal that the next generation of students in Kentucky will graduate with the geographic skills and knowledge that will guarantee their readiness to meet the economic, environmental, and civic challenges of the future.*

SECTION 2. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 157 IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) *The Kentucky Geographic Education Board is established to provide leadership and planning for geography education for the population of Kentucky through the efforts of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators, government agencies, and public interests. The board shall be an independent agency and be attached to the Education, Arts, and Humanities Cabinet for administrative purposes.*
- (2) *The twelve (12) member board shall be appointed to two (2) year terms, initially appointed by the Governor, and composed of the following members:*
 - (a) *Three (3) representatives from postsecondary institutions;*
 - (b) *One (1) representative from the Council for Social Sciences;*
 - (c) *Six (6) representatives from elementary and secondary schools;*
 - (d) *One (1) representative of the Department of Education; and*
 - (e) *One (1) representative of the Council on Postsecondary Education.*
- (3) *The board shall select from its membership a chair and establish bylaws, including bylaws governing board membership and length of terms. Upon expiration of the initial appointments and adoption of bylaws governing membership and length of terms by the board, the board shall be self-perpetuating, and the appointment and length of terms shall be made in accordance with the board's bylaws. Vacancies that occur before the expiration of the initial appointments shall be filled by the Governor for the remaining term of the vacancy.*
- (4) *The board members shall receive no compensation but shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in accordance with state procedures and policies.*

SECTION 3. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 157 IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

The functions of the board shall be to:

- (1) Create an annual plan to improve assessment, curriculums, outreach, and professional development related to geography education in Kentucky;*
- (2) Establish a competitive system for awarding grants for programs to encourage and support geography education;*
- (3) Seek and receive private support to fund state programs to encourage and support geography education;*
- (4) Prepare an annual report of its activities and annual plan, forward copies of the report to the Governor, the Legislative Research Commission, the Kentucky Board of Education, and the Council on Postsecondary Education, and make copies available to citizens of the Commonwealth; and*
- (5) Make recommendations and seek changes through administrative regulations, legislation, and other means to promote geography education in Kentucky.*

SECTION 4. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 157 IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) The Kentucky geography education trust fund is established in the State Treasury to award grants for programs that encourage and support geography education in Kentucky. Funds appropriated by the General Assembly in each biennial budget for the purpose of supporting geography education shall be credited to the fund and invested until needed. The fund may also receive gifts, grants from private and public sources, and federal funds. All money credited to the fund, including interest earned on money in the fund, shall be retained in the fund for reinvestment and used for geography education purposes as defined by the Kentucky Geographic Education Board.*
- (2) Money appropriated to the fund shall not lapse at the end of a fiscal year or a biennium.*

Approved March 31, 2000

