

CHAPTER 91**(SJR 80)**

A JOINT RESOLUTION relating to civic literacy.

WHEREAS, civic literacy encourages young people to be thoughtful and productive members of their communities and future leaders of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, it is crucial to the future health of our representative democracy that all young people be knowledgeable about democratic principles and practices, engaged in their communities and in politics, and committed to the public good; and

WHEREAS, on the National Assessment of Educational Progress in 1998, 75 percent of students scored at "basic" or "below basic" levels; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2000 study by The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, only 39 percent of Kentucky's youth aged 18 to 24 voted; and

WHEREAS, according to "The Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait" nearly one-half of 15 to 25 year olds indicate civic education increases their interest and participation in civic affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Kentucky University Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement has been established to research and implement civic engagement programs for the future quality of life for Kentuckians; and

WHEREAS, individuals who have a clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a representative democracy are more likely to exercise those rights and responsibilities to be competent and responsible citizens; and

WHEREAS, the need for civic literacy in our state is crucial to the long term social and political health of this Commonwealth;

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The Office of the Secretary of State, with the assistance of the Department of Education and the Administrative Office of the Courts, is urged to establish a committee to convene a Summit for Civic Literacy at Northern Kentucky University with the goal of determining a strategy for enhancing long-term civic engagement and literacy within the Commonwealth, and recommending a plan for improving civic engagement and literacy before the 2005 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

Section 2. If the committee is established, the make-up of this committee shall include a diverse range of student, teacher, and administrator representatives from K-16 education, media, civic organizations, and elected officials, and shall be facilitated by the Northern Kentucky University Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement.

Section 3. If the committee is established, the committee shall provide a report with its findings and recommendations for future action to the Office of the Secretary of State no later than December 1, 2004.

Approved April 7, 2004