

By the Council for Lifelong Learning and Representatives
Melvin, Mahon, Kravitz and Kallinger

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to recitation of the
3 Declaration of Independence; creating s.
4 233.0659, F.S.; requiring Celebrate Freedom
5 Week to be recognized in the public schools
6 each September; requiring a portion of the
7 Declaration of Independence to be recited daily
8 by students during that week; providing for
9 excusal of a student from performing the
10 required recitation; providing an effective
11 date.

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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15 Section 1. Section 233.0659, Florida Statutes, is
16 created to read:

17 233.0659 Recitation of the Declaration of
18 Independence.--

19 (1) To educate students about the sacrifices made for
20 freedom in the founding of this country and the values on
21 which this country was founded, the last full week of classes
22 in September shall be recognized in public schools as
23 Celebrate Freedom Week. Celebrate Freedom Week must include
24 at least 3 hours of appropriate instruction in each social
25 studies class, as determined by each school district, which
26 instruction shall include an in-depth study of the intent,
27 meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence.

28 (2) To emphasize the importance of this week, at the
29 beginning of each school day or in homeroom, during the last
30 full week of September, public school principals and teachers
31 shall conduct an oral recitation by students of the following

1 words of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these
2 truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,
3 that they are endowed by their Creator with certain
4 unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the
5 pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights,
6 governments are instituted among men, deriving their just
7 powers from the consent of the governed."

8 (3) Student recitation of this statement shall serve
9 to reaffirm the American ideals of individual liberty.

10 (4) Upon written request by a student's parent, the
11 student must be excused from the recitation of the Declaration
12 of Independence.

13 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2002.
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