



NH STATE SENATE PRESS RELEASE

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Senator Kahn Introduces Genocide Prevention Education Requirement

CONCORD - Today, Senator Jay Kahn (D-Keene) introduced legislation requiring genocide prevention education be included in social-science graduation requirements. SB 727-FN-L changes the language of current statute to include "Holocaust and genocide education" alongside a knowledge of civics and government, economics, geography, and history under criteria for an adequate education and creates a Commission on Holocaust and Genocide Education to advise the Board of Education in the rule. Implementation of curriculum change is left to the jurisdiction of the school district. SB 727-FN-L, was presented to the Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee with strong bipartisan support, including half of the New Hampshire Senate listed as sponsors.

After the hearing, prime sponsor Senator Jay Kahn (D-Keene) issued the following statement:

"Intolerance, bigotry, antisemitism, and national, ethnic, racial, and religious hatred and discrimination are incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy. Such ideologies and practices, when unchallenged, can lead to mental and physical harm and genocide.

Current New Hampshire law requires "Knowledge of civics and government, economics, geography, and history to enable them (students) to participate in the democratic process and to make informed choices as responsible citizens." Comprehensive breakdowns of democratic values and institutions are both foundational to teaching about genocide and part of current New Hampshire curriculum standards. Through education about the Holocaust and other forms of genocide, their causes, and the lessons to be drawn for the present, our students will understand the fragility of democracy, the importance of democratic principles, and the power of individual choices in preventing discrimination and genocide.

Testimony on experiences from genocide survivors, New Hampshire students and teachers, and religious leaders demonstrate the importance of education and the ability of schools to deliver it."

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