

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
78R11625 CAS-D

H.B. 1776  
By: Hughes (Nelson)  
Education  
5/7/2003  
Engrossed

### **DIGEST AND PURPOSE**

The Declaration of Independence reflects the principles and convictions upon which the United States was founded. The 77th Texas Legislature, created Celebrate Freedom Week in public schools in order that students might study the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. H.B. 1776 sets forth provisions regarding an in-depth study of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution as well as daily recitation of an excerpt from the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week, and moves the observance of Celebrate Freedom Week from September to the week in November in which Veterans' Day falls.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the State Board of Education in SECTION 2 of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Renumbers Section 29.903, Education Code, as added by Chapter 451, Acts of the 77th Legislature, Regular Session, 2001, as Section 29.907, Education Code, and amends it as follows:

Sec. 29.907. Redesignated from Sec. 29.903. CELEBRATE FREEDOM WEEK. (a) Sets forth the purpose of establishing Celebrate Freedom Week in public schools, to be observed in the week in which November 11 falls, rather than the last week of September. Provides that for purposes of this subsection, Sunday is considered the first day of the week.

(b) Deletes text authorizing Celebrate Freedom week to include appropriate instruction, as determined by each school district, in each social studies class. Makes a conforming change.

SECTION 2. (a) Requires the State Board of Education (SBOE), by December 31, 2003, to adopt rules requiring each social studies class to include, during Celebrate Freedom Week as provided under Section 29.907, Education Code, or during another full school week as determined by the board of trustees of a school district, appropriate instruction concerning the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, in their historical contexts. Requires the rules to provide for the study of the Declaration of Independence to include the study of the relationship of the ideas expressed in that document to subsequent American history, including the relationship of its ideas to the rich diversity of our people as a nation of immigrants, the American Revolution, the formulation of the United States Constitution, and the abolitionist movement, which led to the Emancipation Proclamation and the women's suffrage movement.

(b) Requires SBOE, in adopting rules under Subsection (a) of this section, to provide for each school district to meet certain requirements and to exempt certain students from the recitation of the Declaration of Independence.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2003.