

## 2021 CBA LPRC POSITION REQUEST FORM

The CBA Civics Education Committee **position request** is as follows:

1) Proposed legislative or regulatory concept:

*Support Proposed House Bill No. 6139, proposed by Rep. Smith (Milford) and co-sponsored by Rep. Turco (Newington), which would establish the Connecticut Civics Education Task Force to review and improve civics education in Connecticut and develop guidelines, standards and curricula for that purpose.*

2) Explanation and rationale for advancing this position:

*With interest in American government and the legal process at a peak, given current events such as the 2020 Presidential Election, various responses on the federal, state and local level to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impeachments of President Trump, we believe that now is the time to revisit Connecticut's civics education requirements. The Civics Education Committee has elected to support the proposed Connecticut Civics Education Task Force because we believe that further study is required to assess whether changes are necessary to the existing requirement of one semester of civics education as a high school graduation requirement, including a review of (1) costs and resources, (2) existing curricula, (3) whether expansion of such requirements should take place at the high school or other levels, and (4) the extent to which civics education should move beyond the three branches of government to focus on citizen engagement with government. We have chosen to support a properly constituted Civics Education Task Force as better positioned to recommend a comprehensive plan to the legislature in lieu of ad hoc changes, some of which have been proposed this session but not yet passed committee screening (requirement of one year of civics education as a high school graduation requirement as compared to current one semester, allow towns to impose civics literacy test, and require one year of civics/digital citizenship/media literacy).*

3) Is draft regulation, legislation or proposed bill included?

*Yes—see [An Act Establishing a Task Force to Evaluate and Make Recommendations to Enhance the Teaching of Civics, Citizenship and American Government in Public Schools, Proposed House Bill No. 6139, 2021 Sess.](#)*

4) What is the date of any legislative hearing, if known?

*None scheduled yet; the bill has not yet been through screening, but we understand that it is gaining interest from members of the Education Committee, who have alerted the Senate Co-Chair of their interest (and our members' potential support).*

5) Was this position previously approved by the CBA? If so, when does/did it expire?

*A similar position was approved nearly a decade ago under Ralph Monaco's presidential civics initiative. We're not sure when it expired, but it's not listed as a current legislative position.*

6) Is the CBA section or committee seeking to join a previously approved CBA section or committee position?

*No.*

7) Potential or actual CBA opposition from another CBA section or committee?

*None. We reached out to Education Law committee on February 10 because this might have some downstream impact on school districts, but have not heard back at the time of this filing.*

8) Strength of section position (including process and results of section vote taken on issue):

*Unanimous vote of eleven members at in-person meeting and followed up by e-mail.*

9) Fiscal impact (on the state):

*Minimal; presumably the task force would be assisted by existing state employees from the Department of Education and General Assembly, and there would costs ancillary to public meetings such as ASL interpretation.*

10) Are you seeking "fast-track" approval? 1

*Yes, given the currency of the topic, and pendency of current legislation with apparent interest from several Education Committee members.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Jonathan Weiner  
Chair, Civics Education Committee

1 A “fast track” recommendation will be submitted to the House of Delegates (HOD) or Board of Governors (BOG) at its next scheduled meeting (or, if between meetings of the HOD or BOG and during the legislative session, to the Executive Committee), and is warranted only when the Legislative Policy & Review Committee concludes that further analysis and study is unnecessary and where there is legitimate time pressure to address pending legislation.