

HB 112-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

7Jan2026... 3095h

2025 SESSION

25-0048

05/02

HOUSE BILL

112-FN

AN ACT

requiring students in the university and community college systems of New Hampshire to pass the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services civics naturalization test, take a course that covers fundamental American documents as part of the general education curriculum, or pass a civics course competency test.

SPONSORS:

Rep. Moffett, Merr. 4; Rep. Belcher, Carr. 4; Rep. Mooney, Hills. 12; Rep. Soti, Rock. 35; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17

COMMITTEE:

Education Funding

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill requires students in the university and community college systems of New Hampshire to pass the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services civics naturalization test, take a course that covers fundamental American documents as part of the general education curriculum, or pass a civics course competency test.

Explanation:

Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struck through.]~~

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT requiring students in the university and community college systems of New Hampshire to pass the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services civics naturalization test, take a course that covers fundamental American documents as part of the general education curriculum, or pass a civics course competency test.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Section; University System of New Hampshire; Civics Graduation Requirement. Amend
2 RSA 187-A by inserting after section 16-c the following new section:

3 187-A:16-d Civics Graduation Requirement.

4 I. Every undergraduate student admitted or transferring to an institution in the university
5 system of New Hampshire on or after July 1, 2027, shall, as a requirement for graduation, and in
6 addition to any other baccalaureate degree graduation requirements:

7 (a) Show proof of having passed the 128-question 2020 version of the United States
8 Citizenship and Immigration Services naturalization test with a score of 70 or better, or shall be
9 required take and pass such test with a score of 70 or greater; or

10 (b) Successfully complete a civics course that covers fundamental American documents
11 as part of the general education curriculum, or pass said civics course competency test.

12 II. University system of New Hampshire institutions shall establish procedures to
13 administer, certify, and record results of this assessment for students needing to satisfy this
14 requirement. Exchange students, foreign nationals, military personnel on full-time active duty or
15 part-time service, or a veteran pursuant to RSA 110-D:3, II or XX shall be exempt from this section.

16 2 New Section; Community College System of New Hampshire; Civics Graduation Requirement.
17 Amend RSA 188-F by inserting after section 6-a the following new section:

18 188-F:6-b Civics Graduation Requirement.

19 I. Every student admitted or transferring to an institution in the community college system
20 of New Hampshire on or after July 1, 2027, shall, as a requirement for graduation and in addition to
21 any other degree graduation requirements:

22 (a) Show proof of having passed the 128-question 2020 version of the United States
23 Citizenship and Immigration Services naturalization test with a score of 70 or better, or shall be
24 required take and pass such test with a score of 70 or greater; or

25 (b) Successfully complete a civics course that covers fundamental American documents
26 as part of the general education curriculum, or pass said civics course competency test.

27 II. Community college system of New Hampshire institutions shall establish procedures to
28 administer, certify, and record results of this assessment for students needing to satisfy this

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1 requirement. Exchange students, foreign nationals, military personnel on full-time active duty or
2 part-time service, or a veteran pursuant to RSA 110-D:3, II or XX shall be exempt from this section.

3 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2027.

HB 112-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE (AMENDMENT #2025-3095h)

AN ACT requiring students in the university and community college systems of New Hampshire to pass the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services civics naturalization test, take a course that covers fundamental American documents as part of the general education curriculum, or pass a civics course competency test.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	USNH - Indeterminable Increase (\$100K - \$500K Per Year)		
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	USNH and CCSNH Operating Expenses			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill adds a graduation requirement for students in the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) and the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH), beginning July 1, 2027, requiring demonstration of basic civics knowledge either through passage of a federal civics naturalization test or completion of a civics course on foundational American documents, with specified exemptions. Both USNH and CCSNH have provided information related to this bill's potential fiscal impact:

University System of New Hampshire (USNH)

The University System of New Hampshire (USNH) has provided the following assumptions related to this bill:

- Absent passage of the naturalization test with a score of 70 percent or better or successful completion of a general education civics course covering fundamental American documents or passage of said civics course competency test, baccalaureate degree conferral to students who have satisfied all other academic requirements for

degree completion and who have paid all related tuition, fee, and other attendance costs would be prohibited.

- Given the potential adverse reputational factor of withholding degree conferral for otherwise qualified baccalaureate graduates and the potential adverse impact on graduation rates, USNH institutions would take an aggressive, proactive approach to ensure that the test requirement would not deter successful degree completion.
- USNH students who provide proof of having passed the naturalization test with a score of 70 percent or better to satisfy a NH public secondary school or NH community college requirement would be deemed to have met the requirement for USNH baccalaureate degree conferral.
- Approximately half of the 4,200 USNH baccalaureate graduates annually are out-of-state students who would be required to satisfy the naturalization test or civics course/test requirement. Enrolled NH residents who are non-public secondary school graduates would also be required to pass one of the tests prior to degree conferral. There would be no limitation on the number of attempts or the time frame in which a prospective USNH baccalaureate graduate could take either test.
- Naturalization test administration would be conducted electronically. This would involve platform acquisition and ongoing licensing, interfacing with each institution's learning management and student information systems, and ongoing technical support. All testing, record-keeping, and student communications and remediation guidance would occur electronically.
- USNH institutions, none of which currently require a civics course covering fundamental American documents, could develop/require such a course in lieu of the naturalization test requirement or as an additional option. Whereas academic program development occurs autonomously by each institution (institutional autonomy established in RSA 187-A:16, this could conceivably involve three curricular development processes. Developing a single course to be offered collectively could mitigate curricular development effort but would likely require additional effort to achieve approval of each institution's faculty senate. Course delivery modality (online or on site) that could potentially mitigate some delivery expense is also at the discretion of each institution.
- General education requirements are determined autonomously by each institution. The formulation of general education credits toward degree completion involves an extensive, re-iterative committee review process involving faculty and staff. Adding a new mandatory course within a complex balance of general education course options (that differ by institution) would alter the curricular composition and necessitate a full general education review process at each institution. The configuration and approval flow of a general education program generally takes one to two years, as faculty/staff also perform

their regular duties. It is possible that the process could be expedited with additional resources to support this option for timely compliance.

- For either test option, staff oversight would be needed to proactively facilitate and ensure statutory compliance prior to degree conferral and to provide remediation guidance to students who do not achieve the graduation requirement.

USNH states that implementing this bill is expected to increase USNH operating expense in an indeterminable amount, ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000 annually. The decision to adopt the naturalization test or the civics course/test requirement, or to offer both, would be determined on an institutional basis. The extent to which test/course administration, record-keeping, and outreach and remediation processes occurred electronically and the extent to which the development and delivery of a required course covering fundamental American documents occurred independently or collectively across the three USNH institutions would determine the additional resources necessary for statutory compliance. Additional expenses would be incurred for technical support. The graduation requirement would take effect in FY 2028 with preparatory work beginning in FY 2027 (or sooner, upon bill passage). USNH anticipates that the expense increase would necessitate increases in USNH tuition and/or mandatory fee rates and/or a reduction in student financial aid from institutional resources.

Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH)

The Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) has provided the following assumptions related to this bill:

- The inclusion of the word “degree” in RSA 188-F:6-b, I, means this statute would apply only to students in academic (credit-bearing) degree programs, although clarification may be needed.
- Students graduating from a NH high school from 2026 onwards are required under RSA 189:11, II(b) to have passed the test with the same percentage of correct answers as this bill requires.
 - Completion of the test in high school fulfills this requirement.
 - Compliance with this bill requires students to “show proof” of having passed the test but also requires CCSNH to administer, certify and record results of the assessment for students needing to fulfill the requirement. CCSNH assumes that it would be allowed to record all graduates from a New Hampshire “public, chartered public, non-public school, or a privately incorporated school that serves as a public school in the state” (from above statutory reference) who graduated after 2026 as having satisfied the requirement without needing a different form of proof from every individual student.

- If not, CCSNH would need to develop another mechanism for students to show prior completion, which would result in higher costs and/or workload, or require the students to take the test while enrolled with CCSNH. It is CCSNH's understanding that completion of the test does not appear on a student's transcript.
- CCSNH would need to identify and record the students who are exempt from the requirement (exchange students, foreign nationals, military personnel on full-time active duty or part-time service, or a veteran pursuant to RSA 110-D:3, II or XX). This is likely to be a manual process. Some veterans self-identify and are assigned a code identifying their veteran status and some do not. The other exempted groups would have to provide evidence of their exempt status so they could be coded by CCSNH as exempt.
- Students could also meet the requirement by successfully completing a civics course that covers fundamental American documents as part of a general education curriculum. Students would need to show they have met the requirement in this manner and be coded by CCSNH as exempt.
- CCSNH has built the test in its learning management system (Canvas) and would need to update it annually.
- CCSNH would run periodic reports throughout each semester and communicate with students who have not met the requirement, as graduation approaches.
- CCSNH would need to address any issues related to withholding degrees from non-completers who have otherwise fulfilled their program requirements.
- CCSNH needs to explore whether there are any accreditation issues resulting from the inclusion of this test as a graduation requirement. For purposes of this fiscal impact estimation, it is assumed there are not.

CCSNH states that, in part, this bill puts the burden of compliance on students for whom meeting its requirements will be a condition of graduation. The bill also creates responsibilities for CCSNH to “establish procedures to administer, certify, and record results of this assessment for students needing to satisfy this requirement.” CCSNH would also need to manage the process to identify and record exemptions. Using the assumptions outlined above, CCSNH states that this bill would increase workload for registrars at the seven community colleges and for information technology staff to code, record, monitor and manage the process for students both exempt from the requirement or needing to fulfill it. Depending on the validity of the assumptions above, CCSNH may need to work with the Department of Education's (NHDOE) third-party testing vendor to create a data interface, which would also require an external expenditure. CCSNH would structure compliance in the most efficient way possible, while helping students meet the requirement and graduate.

CCSNH states that increase in workload would increase costs, either in compensated hours, additional staff, and/or outsourcing. If, to manage workload, CCSNH needed records from the NHDOE to verify individual student completion, it anticipates that the Department's vendor would charge for that work. CCSNH states that when this possibility was explored in 2025, the estimate from the vendor was \$100,000 to develop the interface, with subsequent costs rolled into the contract and charged to CCSNH. CCSNH states it cannot calculate the fiscal impact with any precision since it includes increases in workload associated with implementation, management and compliance. CCSNH notes that the NHDOE outsources these functions at considerable cost, given the complexity of statewide administration. CCSNH cannot state whether it would need to fund additional personnel time or in what amount. Ultimately, CCSNH states this bill's impact is indeterminable.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

University System of New Hampshire and Community College System of New Hampshire