

January 20, 2025

Good Morning Chairman Ladd and Members of the Committee:

HB-112 requires university system and community college system students, as a requirement for graduation, to pass the 2020 version of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services naturalization test.

People come from all over the world to participate in the "American Dream." Our students should understand the obligations and privilege of citizenship.

The State of New Hampshire already requires the *United States Citizenship and Immigration Services naturalization test* of our high school graduates. This is a free test that the students can take until they pass with a C or better. Teachers can determine how they educate the students on content using the 2020 version.

In a previous version of this bill, much of the opposition brought the argument that these students come from all over the world, and this is not their first country, or that the cost is too high for schools and the state should not be burdened with these additional costs. The office of legislative services has added an exaggerated Fiscal Note to this measure, but I suggest that the cost of NOT implementing this measure would be too high. Education about a truly representative government and the freedom it provides is one that every person can benefit from regardless of your country of origin.

In the book *Restoring a City on a Hill* former Massachusetts Governor William Weld and Tom Birmingham, coauthor of the landmark 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Act, write that "Unlike so many others, our country was not based on a state religion, ancient boundaries or bloodlines, but on a shared system of ideas, principles and beliefs." I agree with others that suggest America is not a place, but an idea!!

James Madison said, "The advancement and diffusion of knowledge is the only guardian of true liberty." In 1830, Horace Mann believed that public education's most important role was to prepare students to be active participants in our American process. Education Expert, Professor E.D. Hirsch believed it was the responsibility of adults (parents, teachers, neighbors and friends) to pass on the message of liberty. I view this legislation as especially important as young adults begin to cast their first votes.

Please vote OTP on this important legislation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Hon. Deborah L. Hobson