

Date of Hearing: April 5, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Patrick O'Donnell, Chair
AB 1399 (Nazarian) – As Amended March 28, 2017

SUBJECT: Pupil instruction: genocide

SUMMARY: Establishes the recognition of study in genocide and human atrocities to be added to a single subject teaching credential. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Defines “recognition of study in genocide and human atrocities” to mean a statement added to a single subject teaching credential to indicate that the holder of the single subject teaching credential has completed a commission-approved program that can be applied to the academic instruction authorized by his or her credential; and, specifies that a recognition of study in genocide and human atrocities teacher education program may be offered as part of an initial teacher preparation program or as a separate program for teachers who possess a valid single subject teaching credential.
- 2) Requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to convene a workgroup to develop program standards for the issuance of a recognition of study in genocides and human atrocities for holders of a single subject teaching credential. Specifies the workgroup shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following:
 - a) The Superintendent (SPI) or his or her representative.
 - b) Representatives from approved teacher preparation programs, including at least one representative from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.
 - c) A researcher.
 - d) A historian.
 - e) A representative from a school district, a county office of education, or a charter school.
 - f) A history-social science teacher.
 - g) A representative of other organizations deemed appropriate by the commission.
 - h) A parent representative.
- 3) Specifies the duties of the workgroup shall also include, but are not limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Advise the Governor and the Legislature on strategies to improve genocide, human rights, and tolerance education.
 - b) Identify all programs in the state that train teachers in genocide studies.

- c) Identify all nonprofit organizations in the state that train teachers in genocide studies.
 - d) Identify strategies for improving access to genocide education materials and information.
 - e) Promote education on genocide.
- 4) Requires the workgroup to begin meeting on January 1, 2018.
 - 5) Authorizes the commission to add a recognition of study in genocide and human atrocities to the single subject teaching credential of a teacher who meets the standards established.
 - 6) Specifies that the California State University and other teacher preparation institutions are encouraged to establish goals to increase the number of teachers participating in genocide and human atrocities education programs.
 - 7) Requires the commission and the Superintendent to gather and post, on an appropriate Internet Web site, a list of nonprofit organizations and best practices from school districts and schools on curriculum development and professional development relating to implementing and sustaining genocide and human atrocities education programs.
 - 8) Specifies that a recognition of study in genocide and human atrocities shall not be considered a type of authorization, shall not be used as a condition of employment, shall not replace a subject matter competence requirement, and shall not be used in making employment decisions.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Authorizes the CTC to establish the Recognition of Study in Linked Learning; authorizes the CTC to establish a working group to develop the Recognition of Study in Linked Learning; and, specifies the Recognition of Study shall not be considered a type of authorization, shall not be used as a condition of employment, shall not replace as subject matter competence requirement and shall not be used in making employment decisions. (Education Code Section 44257.3)
- 2) Encourages the department to incorporate into publications that provide examples of curriculum resources for teacher use those materials developed by publishers of nonfiction, trade books, and primary sources, or other public or private organizations, that are age appropriate and consistent with the subject frameworks on history and social science that deal with the Armenian, Cambodian, Darfur, and Rwandan genocides. (Education Code Section 51226.3)
- 3) Requires the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to offer courses in the following areas of study: Social sciences, drawing upon the disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, designed to fit the maturity of the pupils. Instruction shall provide a foundation for understanding the history, resources, development, and government of California and the United States of America; instruction in our American legal system, the operation of the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems, and the rights and duties of citizens under the criminal and civil law and the State and Federal Constitutions; the development of the American economic system, including the role of the entrepreneur and labor; the relations of persons to their human and

natural environment; eastern and western cultures and civilizations; human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust, and contemporary issues. (Education Code Section 51220)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: This bill requires the CTC to convene a workgroup and establish a recognition of study in genocide for single subject credentialed teachers.

According to the author, while the subjects of genocide and human atrocities are part of the California Department of Education's recently updated History-Social Science framework, more can be done to teach these important topics. Developing program standards for the issuance of a recognition of study in genocides and human atrocities for those who hold single-subject teaching credentials and who will be teaching pupils in history-social science classes will allow teachers to expand their expertise in how to effectively teach genocide and human atrocities. In the past 150 years, tens of millions of men, women, and children have lost their lives in genocides or mass atrocities. California is home to the largest number of refugees and immigrants in the United States, many of whom are genocide survivors or descendants of genocide survivors. Equipping teachers with the tools to engage and educate students in genocide and human atrocities is critical for training up sensitive, socially-conscious individuals. Creating recognition of study will increase the number of teachers able to effectively teach genocide, and accomplish the goal of preparing generations of Californians to be engaged global citizens.

Background: As way of background, the following instances of genocide are currently mentioned in the Education Code:

The Armenian Genocide. The California Senate, in SB 424 (Poochigian), Chapter 9, Statutes of 2005, recognized the Armenian Genocide as a series of events occurring between 1915 and 1918 in which the rulers of the Ottoman Turkish Empire systematically exterminated its Armenian citizens. During this time, the rulers conducted massacres and forced labor of able bodied Armenian men. Additionally, the Ottoman Turkish rulers forced Armenian women, children, elderly, and infirm to march from their homeland to the Syrian Desert. Approximately 75% of those Armenian people on these marches died. Between 1 million and 1.5 million Armenian people were killed during this three year period.

The Genocide in Darfur. In 2003, Darfur, in the African Republic of Sudan, erupted in civil war and the Sudanese government supported the militia groups known as the Janjaweed. The Janjaweed began to systematically execute the people of Darfur through displacement, starvation, murder, torture, and rape. While the civil war officially came to an end in 2005, the conflict continues. More than 2 million people have been killed, with millions more displaced. In 2004, the United States Secretary of State Colin Powell, identified these attacks as genocide, though the International Security Council has disagreed and issued warrants against the former Sudanese and Janjaweed leaders for crimes against humanity, but refused to issue warrants for the charge of genocide.

The Genocide in Rwanda. The East-African state of Rwanda has been plagued by civil conflict between the majority Hutu and minority Tutsi people since 1959. In 1994, the Hutus engaged in a mass slaughter of the Tutsis during a 100 day period. Touted as an effort to re-enslave the

Tutsi people, the Hutus systematically massacred people in their homes, schools, churches, and villages. Estimates of the death toll range from 500,000 to nearly 1.1 million Tutsi people.

The Genocide in Cambodia. In 1975, the Khmer Rouge took control over the war-ravaged country of Cambodia under the belief that the Cambodian people had been tainted by their exposure to the capitalist ideas of the West during the Vietnam War. In a mass slaughter, educated persons, Christians, Buddhists, and Muslims were specifically targeted, though no one was safe. The Khmer Rouge executed more than 1.7 million people before they were ousted by the Communist Vietnamese government in 1979.

Demand for the Recognition of Study. It is unclear whether there will be demand for the recognition of study in genocide. One could assume that high school history teachers would be the most likely group of teachers that might apply for the recognition, but that isn't entirely clear.

Implementation Considerations. In 2011 the Legislature enacted the recognition of study in Linked Learning. When the CTC convened the working group, the working group made 40 recommendations, including those regarding the recognition of study. The CTC has prioritized those 40 recommendations and has begun implementing them in priority order. As such, the CTC has yet to implement the recognition of study in Linked Learning. In light of this workload issue, the committee should consider whether the recognition of study in genocide should be a priority for the CTC, or whether the CTC should continue their focus on improving teacher quality and teacher supply.

Committee Amendments: The committee should consider the following amendments:

- 1) Conform the recognition of study in genocide with the recognition of study in Linked Learning by authorizing the CTC to establish the recognition of study, authorizing the CTC to convene a workgroup, and authorizing the CTC and SPI to gather and post information on an appropriate Internet Web site.
- 2) Delete the requirement for the working group to begin meeting on January 1, 2018.

Previous Legislation: AB 1304 (Block), Chapter 259, Statutes of 2011, established the Recognition of Study in Linked Learning; authorized the CTC to established a working group to develop the Recognition of Study in Linked Learning; and, specified the Recognition of Study shall not be considered a type of authorization, shall not be used as a condition of employment, shall not replace as subject matter competence requirement and shall not be used in making employment decisions.

AB 1853 (Bonilla) from 2012, would have authorized the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to convene a workgroup to develop program standards for the issuance of a recognition of study in transitional kindergarten for holders of a multiple subject teaching credential who will be teaching pupils enrolled in a transitional kindergarten program. The bill was vetoed by the Governor with the following message:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1853 without my signature. This bill would require the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to create a committee to do the preliminary work that would be required to create yet another teaching credential -- -- something we don't need.

AB 659 (Nazarian) of 2013, which was held in the Senate Education Committee, would have required the CDE to include the Armenian Genocide in its published curriculum resources and encourages the incorporation of specific instances of genocide into existing curriculum, professional development activities, and in the next revision of the history/social science curriculum framework.

AJR 35 (Perez) of 2014 designated the week of April 20 through 26, 2014, as “California Week of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923,” and would memorialize the Congress and the President of the United States to observe the California Week of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide by participating in the Armenian Genocide Commemorative Project.

AJR 41 (Ian Calderon) of 2014, commended the extraordinary service delivered by Near East Relief to the survivors of the Armenian Genocide and the Assyrian Genocide.

SB 1380 (Wyland), Statutes of 2014, required the IQC to consider including the Armenian Genocide in the next revision of the history/social science framework and specifically identifies the Armenian Genocide when encouraging the incorporation of oral testimony into the teaching of human rights and genocide.

SB 1419 (Wyland) of 2014, which was held in the Senate Education Committee, would have, commencing with the 2015–16 school year, prohibited a pupil from receiving credit for passing a course in world history, culture, and geography, without exposure in that course to an oral history component, as defined, specifically related to genocides, specifically including the Armenian Genocide.

SJR 21 (De León and Yee) of 2014 designated and encouraged the people of California to commemorate the month of April 2014, as “California Month of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923,” and called upon the Congress and the President of the United States to act likewise and to formally and consistently recognize and reaffirm the historical truth that the atrocities committed against the Armenian people constituted genocide. The measure commended conscientious educators who teach about human rights and genocide. The measure called upon the President to work toward equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relations and a fair, just, and comprehensive international resolution of this crime against humanity, and called upon the Republic of Turkey to acknowledge the facts of the Armenian Genocide and to work toward a just resolution.

SB 234 (Wyland) of 2009, which died in Assembly Appropriations, required the Commission to consider an oral history component specifically related to genocides, including but not limited to, the Darfur, Rwandan, Cambodian, Jewish Holocaust, or Armenian genocides in the history/social science curriculum.

SR 31 (Wyland) of 2009, which died in Senate Rules, resolved that schools in California are encouraged to include an oral history of genocides, including, but not necessarily limited to, the Darfur, Rwandan, Cambodian, Jewish Holocaust, and Armenian genocides, in the history/social science curriculum component.

SB 424 (Poochigian), Chapter 9, Statutes of 2005, establishes April 24 of each year as the "California Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide" and the period beginning on the Sunday before that day through the following Sunday as the days of remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.

ACR 116 (Yee), Chapter 114, Statutes of 2004, urged the State Board of Education to take action at the next instructional materials primary adoption cycle to ensure that history/social science textbooks used in California schools in grade 10 fairly and accurately portray human rights violations and other historical atrocities in a comprehensive manner.

SJR 1 (Poochigian), Chapter 18, Statutes of 2003, designated April 24, 2003, as the "California Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923" and requests Congress to likewise act to commemorate the Armenian Genocide.

AB 1021 (Yee) of 2003, would have required the Armenian Genocide be considered in the next cycle in which the history/social science curriculum framework and its accompanying instructional materials are adopted. This bill died in Assembly Appropriations.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

Armenian national Committee of America-Western Region
The Genocide Education Project
An individual

Opposition

None on file

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