HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 385 FILED ON: 1/8/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 603

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Tara T. Hong

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to enhancing civic education in Massachusetts public schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Tara T. Hong	*18th Middlesex*	*1/8/2025*
Colleen M. Garry	*36th Middlesex*	*3/9/2025*
Vanna Howard	*17th Middlesex*	*6/25/2025*
Patrick Joseph Kearney	*4th Plymouth*	*5/20/2025*
Samantha Montaño	*15th Suffolk*	*3/5/2025*
Amy Mah Sangiolo	*11th Middlesex*	*6/9/2025*

HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 385 FILED ON: 1/8/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 603

By Representative Hong of Lowell, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 603) of Tara T. Hong, Colleen M. Garry and Samantha Montaño relative to civic education in public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act relative to enhancing civic education in Massachusetts public schools.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. The fifteenth paragraph of section 1I of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out clauses (l) and (m) and inserting in place thereof the following 3 clauses:-

(l) nutrition and wellness programs;

(m) genocide education programs; and

(n) civic education.

SECTION 2. Section 2 of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by adding the following subsection:-

(e)(1) Subject to appropriation, all public high schools shall require students to complete 1 semester of the subject of civic education as a graduation requirement. The department shall establish a process for setting curriculum standards for the subject of civic education that will

incorporate: (i) the principles and structure of the federal government of the United States and the government of the commonwealth; (ii) the rights and responsibilities of United States citizens, including the importance of voting and civic participation; (iii) the history and role of civic movements in the commonwealth and the United States; and (iv) opportunities for students to engage in community-based projects or civic activities.

(2) The curriculum standards for the subject of civic education established by the department shall include: (i) a standardized civic education curriculum to be implemented across public high schools that is developed and approved by the department; (ii) an inclusive curriculum that reflects the diverse histories and contributions of all communities in the commonwealth and in the United States; and (iii) guidance and resources provided by the department to public high schools to effectively implement the curriculum.

(3). The department shall work with public high schools and the high school voter challenge program established in section 26A of chapter 51 to encourage and facilitate voter registration for eligible students by: (i) providing information on voter registration and election participation to students; (ii) hosting voter registration drives on public high school campuses in collaboration with local election offices; and (iii) creating opportunities for students to participate in local civic and community engagement activities.

(4) The department shall publish the curriculum and implementation guidelines no later than 5 months before the start of each school year.

(5) The department shall prepare an annual report that includes, but is not limited to:

(i) the progress and outcomes of the civic education requirement; (ii) student engagement metrics; and (iii) the overall curriculum effectiveness. The department shall submit the annual

report to the governor, the chairs of the joint committee on education and the offices of the house and senate clerk.

SECTION 3. Section 2 shall take effect for the school year beginning after July 1, 2026.