AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:274.1(D), relative to required courses of study; to require passage of a certain proficiency test to earn credit in certain Civics courses required for high school graduation; to provide relative to administration of the test; to provide for exceptions; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:274.1(D) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§274.1. Civics and Free Enterprise; required; proficiency test; exceptions

D.(1) The legislature, in recognition of the national Civics Education Initiative's efforts to ensure that every citizen can, at a minimum, demonstrate the same knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history, principles, and form of the United States government required of naturalized citizens, hereby provides for the Louisiana Civics Education Initiative.

(2) For students who enter the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2015, high school credit shall not be awarded for successfully completing the course work for Civics, or subjects permitted to substitute for Civics, as provided in
Subsection B of this Section, unless the student correctly answers at least sixty
of the one hundred questions listed in a test identical to the civics portion of the
naturalization test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration
Services.

(3) A student shall be allowed to take the test as many times as necessary
to achieve a passing score.

(4) The governing authority of each public high school shall determine
the method and manner in which to administer the test.

(5) Passage of the test shall be documented on the student's transcript.

(6) A student who is exempted in accordance with the student's
individualized educational program pursuant to the federal Individuals with
Disabilities Education Act shall not be required to take or pass the test required
by this Subsection.

Section 2. This Act shall become effective on June 30, 2015.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jeanne C. Johnston.

DIGEST
SB 34 Original 2015 Regular Session Cortez

Present law, as a prerequisite to high school graduation, requires students to complete two
semesters of instruction in Civics, including a section on Free Enterprise, equal to one unit
of credit.

Present law provides that for students who enter the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2014,
Government, AP US Government and Politics: Comparative, or AP US Government and
Politics: United States may be substituted for Civics and shall satisfy the Civics and Free
Enterprise instruction required by present law.

Proposed law retains present law and additionally provides for the Louisiana Civics
Education Initiative as follows:

(1) For students who enter the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2015, credit shall not be
awarded for successfully completing the course work required by present law, unless
the student correctly answers at least sixty of the one hundred questions listed in a
test identical to the civics portion of the naturalization test used by the United States
Citizenship and Immigration Services.

(2) Students shall be allowed to take the test as many times as necessary to achieve a
passing score.

(3) Public school governing authorities may determine how the test will be administered.
(4) Passage of the test shall be noted on the student's transcript.

(5) Students who are exempted by their individualized education program under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall not be required to take and pass the test.

Effective June 30, 2015.

(Adds R.S. 17:274.1(D))