

COMBATING THE LIES OF AUTHORITARIANS IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS ACT

MARCH 5, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. WALBERG, from the Committee on Education and the
Workforce, submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

MINORITY VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 1005]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Education and the Workforce, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1005) to prohibit elementary and secondary schools from accepting funds from or entering into contracts with the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendments are as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Combating the Lies of Authoritarians in School Systems Act” or the “CLASS Act”.

SEC. 2. DISCLOSURE OF FOREIGN FUNDING AND CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As a condition on receipt of Federal financial assistance under any applicable program by a public elementary school or a public secondary school, the school, not later than 30 days after receiving funds in excess of \$10,000 in the aggregate from a foreign source, or entering into one or more contracts with an aggregate value in excess of \$10,000 with a foreign source, shall submit to the Secretary of Education a written disclosure that identifies—

- (1) the name and country of origin of the foreign source;
- (2) in a case in which a school receives funds from a foreign source—
 - (A) the amount of funds received from that source; and
 - (B) any terms or conditions applicable to the receipt of such funds; and

(3) in a case in which a school enters into a contract with a foreign source, the terms and conditions of such contract.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “applicable program” has the meaning given that term in section 400 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1221).

(2) The terms “elementary school” and “secondary school” have the meanings given those terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(3) The term “Federal financial assistance” has the meaning given that term in section 7501(a)(5) of title 31, United States Code.

(4) The term “foreign source” has the meaning given that term in section 117(h) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1011f(h)).

Amend the title so as to read:

A bill to require public elementary and secondary schools to disclose certain funds received from, or contracts with, a foreign source, and for other purposes.

PURPOSE

The purpose of H.R. 1005, the *Combating the Lies of Authoritarians in School Systems Act*, is to require school districts to disclose the receipt of funding from foreign governments.

COMMITTEE ACTION

118TH CONGRESS

First Session—Hearings

On September 19, 2023, the Committee on Education and the Workforce’s Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing on “Academic Freedom Under Attack: Loosening the CCP’s Grip on America’s Classrooms.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the covert influence of foreign governments and organizations, particularly the Chinese Communist Party, on U.S. K–12 schools. Testifying before the Subcommittee were Mr. Michael Gonzalez, Senior Fellow, Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Gisela Perez Kusakawa, Executive Director, Asian American Scholar Forum, New York, NY; Mrs. Nicole Neily, President, Parents Defending Education, Arlington, VA; and Mr. Ryan Walters, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma City, OK.

Second Session—Hearings

On May 8, 2024, the Committee’s Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing on “Confronting Pervasive Antisemitism in K–12 Schools.” The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the proliferation of antisemitism in K–12 schools. During the hearing, then-Committee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R–NC) asked New York City Chancellor David Banks if foreign governments donate significant funding to NYC Public Schools. Chancellor Banks testified that the Qatar Foundation did donate, and he followed up after the hearing and confirmed that the Italian government and the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea also contributed funding to NYC Public Schools’ K–12 schools. Testifying before the Subcommittee were Mr. David Banks, Chancellor, New York City Public Schools, New York City, NY; Ms. Karla Silvestre, President, Montgomery County Board of Education, Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville,

MD; Mr. Emerson Sykes, Senior Staff Attorney, American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY; and Ms. Enikia Ford Morthel, Superintendent, Berkeley Unified School District, Berkeley, CA.

Legislative Action

On September 19, 2023, Representative David Joyce (R-OH) introduced H.R. 5567, the *Combating the Lies of Authoritarians in School Systems* (CLASS) Act, with Representatives Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Ed Case (D-HI), Brandon Williams (R-NY), Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND), Troy Balderson (R-OH), Anthony D'Esposito (R-NY), Carlos Gimenez (R-FL), Lisa McClain (R-MI), Mike Carey (R-OH), Ashley Hinson (R-IA), and Jenniffer González-Colón (R-PR) as original co-sponsors. The bill was referred solely to the Committee on Education and the Workforce. On June 13, 2024, the Committee considered H.R. 5567 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a recorded vote of 23–16. The Committee considered the following amendments to H.R. 5567:

1. Representative Williams offered an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute that struck section 2 and inserted a minimum threshold of \$10,000 so as to ensure nominal gifts do not trigger reporting. The amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 23–16.
2. Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA) offered an amendment that added an authorization of \$300 million per year starting in fiscal year 2025. The amendment failed by a recorded vote of 16–24.

119TH CONGRESS

First Session—Hearings

On February 5, 2025, the Committee on Education and Workforce held a hearing titled “The State of American Education.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the state of American education, including K–12 education, postsecondary education, and workforce development. During the hearing, Representative Mary Miller (R-IL) expressed concerns with China’s influence campaign in K–12 schools. Witness Mrs. Nicole Neily agreed with Representative Miller’s concerns and testified that Chinese Communist Party propaganda has infiltrated more than 500 K–12 schools. Testifying before the Committee were Mrs. Neily, President, Parents Defending Education, Arlington, VA; Dr. Preston Cooper, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C.; Mrs. Janai Nelson, President and Director-Counsel, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.; and Mr. Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., President and CEO, Society for Human Resource Management, Alexandria, VA.

Legislative Action

On February 5, 2025, Representative David Joyce introduced H.R. 1005, the *Combating the Lies of Authoritarians in School Systems* (CLASS) Act, with Representative Michael Rulli (R-OH) as an original co-sponsor. The bill was referred solely to the Committee on Education and Workforce. On February 12, 2025, the Committee considered H.R. 1005 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a recorded

vote of 20–14. The Committee considered the following amendments to H.R. 1005:

1. Representative Rulli offered an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute that struck section 2 and inserted a minimum threshold of \$10,000 to ensure nominal gifts do not trigger reporting requirements. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

2. Ranking Member Scott offered an amendment that added an authorization of \$300 million per year starting in fiscal year 2026. The amendment failed by a recorded vote of 14–20.

3. Representative Suzanne Bonamici (D–OR) offered an amendment that stipulated the Department of Education “shall take such steps as may be necessary otherwise to enforce” the bill, which is already implicit in the bill and redundant with the existing text. The amendment failed by voice vote.

COMMITTEE VIEWS

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, the Chinese Communist Party has infiltrated American K–12 schools through grants, sister school partnerships, and other programming called Confucius Classrooms, which is a trojan horse for Chinese propaganda.

CHINA’S ACTIVITY IN U.S. K–12 SCHOOLS

Styled as language and culture programs, Confucius Classrooms are an important element of the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) global influence campaign. The Chinese government’s effort to forge ties with American schools through its Ministry of Education Office of Chinese Language Council International, which until recently was known as “Hanban,” is one facet of the CCP’s broader soft-power strategy to influence policy in nations throughout the world. The United States Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations found that expanding Confucius Classrooms in the United States has been a top priority for the Chinese government.¹ Many K–12 schools eagerly accepted CCP-linked grants, which came with perks including fully funded teacher exchanges, Chinese language programs, and opportunities for American students to learn in China.²

Confucius Classrooms are smaller-scale, K–12 versions of Confucius Institutes that the CCP has pushed for on U.S. college campuses. These institutes purport to teach Chinese language and culture. Confucius Institutes are established as partnerships between a host institution, a Chinese partner (usually a Chinese university), and a Chinese government agency. The Ministry of Education Office of Chinese Language Council International funds each Confucius Institute, often at around \$100,000 per year, and asks host institutions to match those funds with their own contributions, usually classroom and office space.

¹ <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/imo/media/doc/PSI%20Report%20China%27s%20Impact%20on%20the%20US%20Education%20System.pdf>.
² <https://defendinged.org/investigations/little-red-classrooms-china-infiltration-of-american-k-12-schools/>.

China heavily encouraged the creation of Confucius Classrooms, and many of these developed as offshoots of a Confucius Institute. China strategically deployed and rapidly expanded their Confucius Classrooms, going from very few in 2008 to more than a thousand worldwide by 2017. More than 500 American K–12 schools have hosted Confucius Classrooms, aided in part by the Asia Society, an American nonprofit that previously ran a network of 100 Confucius Classrooms before they ended the partnership in 2021.³ A Parents Defending Education report tracked Chinese affiliation in 143 schools across 34 states, with at least seven still active as of publication.⁴

Confucius Institute funding comes with strings attached that compromise academic freedom. The Chinese government approves teachers, events, and speakers and requires teachers to sign same contracts pledging they will not damage the national interests of China. The contracts make clear Chinese directors or teachers will be terminated if they “violate Chinese laws” or “engage in activities detrimental to national interests” and states that they must “conscientiously safeguard national interests.”⁵

OTHER COUNTRIES’ INFLUENCE IN US K–12 SCHOOLS

While it appears that no other country has a program similar in scope and size to the CCP’s propaganda campaign in American schools, other countries have also invested in language and cultural educational programs in American K–12 schools.

One notable example is Qatar. The Qatar Foundation, along with its subsidiaries like Qatar Foundation International and the Qatar National Research Fund, has been actively involved in influencing American K–12 education through financial partnerships with individual schools.⁶ From 2009 to 2017, the Qatar Foundation allocated \$30.6 million to various schools across 12 U.S. states. The funds are predominantly directed towards facilitating Arabic language programs, and they cover expenses for teacher education, materials, and salaries. These contributions have taken various forms, from direct funds to professional development initiatives, such as teacher councils and language conferences. Additionally, there are instances of school districts, like the Tucson Unified School District and New Haven Public Schools, receiving substantial grants over multiple years.⁷

Other countries have also made notable donations to U.S. K–12 schools. After the May 8, 2024, subcommittee hearing on anti-semitism in K–12 schools, then-New York City Public Schools Chancellor David Banks informed Committee staff that the Italian-American Committee on Education, which is connected to the Italian government, contributed \$257,000 to New York City Public Schools from 2021 to 2024. Chancellor Banks also reported that the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in New York contributed \$16,000 to support Korean instruction and programming in

³ <https://www.heritage.org/homeland-security/commentary/confucius-institutes-chinas-trojan-horse>.

⁴ <https://defendinged.org/investigations/little-red-classrooms-china-infiltration-of-american-k-12-schools/>.

⁵ <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/imo/media/doc/PSI%20Report%20China%27s%20Impact%20on%20the%20US%20Education%20System.pdf>.

⁶ https://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FARA_Memo_with_Exhibits_R-1.pdf.

⁷ *Ibid.*

New York City Public Schools. It is unclear the extent to which these foreign ties had been publicized prior to the Committee's request for information.⁸

It is imperative to ensure that American students are not subject to malicious foreign influence in their schools. As such, the *CLASS Act* requires school districts to disclose to the Secretary of Education within 30 days any instance of receiving funding from or entering into a contract with a foreign source. The written disclosure must include the name and country of origin of the foreign source, the amount of funds received, and any terms and conditions that apply to the funds.

CONCLUSION

It is unacceptable that foreign adversaries such as the CCP are attempting to influence U.S. K–12 schools. Congress should take immediate action to ensure that students are not being indoctrinated with communist propaganda. Congress should also take action to ensure that foreign influence is fully disclosed. The *CLASS Act* will help ensure that the Chinese government does not take advantage of local school districts and that the U.S. Department of Education is aware of all significant spending by foreign countries in the U.S. K–12 education system.

H.R. 1005 SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

Section 1—Short Title

- Names the bill the *Combating the Lies of Authoritarians in School Systems Act* or *CLASS Act*.

Section 2—Disclosure of Foreign Funding and Contracts

- The bill requires that, as a condition of receiving federal financial assistance under a U.S. Department of Education program by a public elementary school or public secondary school, the school shall report to the Secretary of Education when receiving foreign funds in excess of \$10,000, and such reporting shall include:
 - The name and country of origin of the foreign source.
 - The amount of funds received from the source.
 - The terms and conditions applicable to the receipt of funds.
 - The terms and conditions of any contract with a foreign source.

EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS

The amendments, including the amendment in the nature of a substitute, are explained in the body of this report.

APPLICATION OF LAW TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 102(b)(3) of Public Law 104–1 requires a description of the application of this bill to the legislative branch. H.R. 1005 requires K–12 school districts to disclose the receipt of funding from

⁸Documentation emailed from New York City Public Schools to Committee staff on May 22, 2024.

foreign governments. H.R. 1005 applies solely to K–12 schools and therefore does not apply to the Legislative Branch.

UNFUNDED MANDATE STATEMENT

Pursuant to Section 423 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, Pub. L. No. 93–344 (as amended by Section 101(a)(2) of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, Pub. L. No. 104–4), the Committee adopts as its own the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

EARMARK STATEMENT

H.R. 1005 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

ROLL CALL VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires the Committee Report to include for each record vote on a motion to report the measure or matter and on any amendments offered to the measure or matter the total number of votes for and against and the names of the Members voting for and against.

Date: 2/12/25

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE

Roll Call: 9

Bill: H.R. 1005

Amendment Number: n/a

Disposition: Not Adopted by a Full Committee Roll Call Vote (14 y - 20 n)

Sponsor/Amendment: Rep. Scott / DAMD_001

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. WALBERG (MI) (Chairman)		X		Mr. SCOTT (VA) (Ranking)	X		
Mr. WILSON (SC)		X		Mr. GRIJALVA (AZ)			X
Mrs. FOXX (NC)		X		Mr. COURNTEY (CT)	X		
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)		X		Ms. WILSON (FL)			X
Mr. GROTHMAN (WI)		X		Ms. BONAMICI (OR)	X		
Ms. STEFANIK (NY)		X		Mr. TAKANO (CA)	X		
Mr. ALLEN (GA)		X		Ms. ADAMS (NC)	X		
Mr. COMER (KY)			X	Mr. DESAULNIER (CA)	X		
Mr. OWENS (UT)		X		Mr. NORCROSS (NJ)	X		
Ms. MCCLAIN (MI)		X		Ms. MCBATH (GA)	X		
Mrs. MILLER (IL)		X		Ms. HAYES (CT)	X		
Ms. LETLOW (LA)		X		Ms. OMAR (MN)	X		
Mr. KILEY (CA)		X		Ms. STEVENS (MI)	X		
Ms. HOUCHIN (IN)		X		Mr. CASAR (TX)	X		
Mr. RULLI (OH)		X		Ms. LEE (PA)	X		
Mr. MOYLAN (GU)		X		Mr. MANNION (NY)	X		
Mr. ONDER (MO)		X					
Mr. MACKENZIE (PA)		X					
Mr. BAUMGARTNER (WA)		X					
Mr. HARRIS (NC)		X					
Mr. MESSMER (IN)		X					

TOTALS: Ayes: 14

Nos: 20

Not Voting: 3

Total: 37 / Quorum: 34 / Report: 14Y - 20N

(21 R - 16 D)

Date: 2/12/25

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE

Roll Call: 10

Bill: H.R. 1005

Amendment Number: n/a

Disposition: Adopted by a Full Committee Roll Call Vote (20 y - 14 n)

Sponsor/Amendment: Motion to Report bill, as amended

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. WALBERG (MI) (Chairman)	X			Mr. SCOTT (VA) (Ranking)		X	
Mr. WILSON (SC)	X			Mr. GRIJALVA (AZ)			X
Mrs. FOXX (NC)	X			Mr. COURNTEY (CT)		X	
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)	X			Ms. WILSON (FL)			X
Mr. GROTHMAN (WI)	X			Ms. BONAMICI (OR)		X	
Ms. STEFANIK (NY)	X			Mr. TAKANO (CA)		X	
Mr. ALLEN (GA)	X			Ms. ADAMS (NC)		X	
Mr. COMER (KY)			X	Mr. DESAULNIER (CA)		X	
Mr. OWENS (UT)	X			Mr. NORCROSS (NJ)		X	
Ms. MCCLAIN (MI)	X			Ms. MCBATH (GA)		X	
Mrs. MILLER (IL)	X			Ms. HAYES (CT)		X	
Ms. LETLOW (LA)	X			Ms. OMAR (MN)		X	
Mr. KILEY (CA)	X			Ms. STEVENS (MI)		X	
Ms. HOUCHIN (IN)	X			Mr. CASAR (TX)		X	
Mr. RULLI (OH)	X			Ms. LEE (PA)		X	
Mr. MOYLAN (GU)	X			Mr. MANNION (NY)		X	
Mr. ONDER (MO)	X						
Mr. MACKENZIE (PA)	X						
Mr. BAUMGARTNER (WA)	X						
Mr. HARRIS (NC)	X						
Mr. MESSMER (IN)	X						

TOTALS: Ayes: 20

Nos: 14

Not Voting: 3

Total: 37 / Quorum: 34 / Report: 20Y - 14N

(21 R - 16 D)

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with clause (3)(c) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the goal of H.R. 1005 is to require K–12 school districts to disclose the receipt of funding from foreign governments.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

No provision of H.R. 1005 establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program, a program that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

STATEMENT OF OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE COMMITTEE

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII and clause 2(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee’s oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE HEARING

In compliance with clause 3(c)(6) of rule XIII the following hearing held during the 119th Congress was used to develop or consider H.R. 1005: On February 5, 2025, the Committee on Education and Workforce held a hearing on “The State of American Education.”

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY AND CBO COST ESTIMATE

With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and with respect to requirements of clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee adopts as its own the cost estimate for the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office.

H.R. 1005, CLASS Act			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Education and Workforce on February 12, 2025			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2025	2025-2030	2025-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	*	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? No	
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

H.R. 1005 would require all public elementary and secondary schools that receive funding from the Department of Education to disclose to the department funds received from or contracts signed with foreign sources that are more than \$10,000.

CBO expects that schools would comply with the new requirements; thus, enacting the bill would not affect their eligibility to receive federal funds. Based on the costs of similar activities, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost the Department of Education less than \$500,000 over the 2025–2030 period. Any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Garrett Quenneville. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director, Congressional Budget Office.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

Clause 3(d)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison of the costs that would be incurred in carrying out H.R. 1005. However, clause 3(d)(2)(B) of that Rule provides that this requirement does not apply when, as with the present report, the Committee adopts as its own the cost estimate for the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

H.R. 1005, as reported by the Committee, makes no changes to existing law.

MINORITY VIEWS

INTRODUCTION

H.R. 1005, the *Combating the Lies of Authoritarians in School Systems (CLASS) Act*, requires public elementary and secondary schools to disclose any receipt of funds “in excess of \$10,000 in the aggregate from a foreign source, or entering into one or more contracts with an aggregate value in excess of \$10,000 with a foreign source”,¹ to the Secretary of Education within 30 days of receiving funds as a condition of receiving federal funds. The Majority claims the only way to tackle “nefarious foreign influence” in K–12 classrooms is by “ensuring no federal education funds go to schools that collaborate with, receiving funding from or otherwise engage in agreements with the People’s Republic of China.”² Yet, it has not proven foreign influence exists in public schools, leaves raises a number of administrative questions and concerns for public schools, and ignores real issues facing public education.

SUMMARY OF CONCERNS

Foreign influence has not posed a threat to K–12 classrooms

Confucius Classrooms, which are affiliated with Confucious Institutes, are centers for Chinese culture and language established at public and private elementary and secondary schools—either to bolster a Chinese language program already at the school or to start a new one. Many countries around the world lack quality Chinese language and culture resources and Confucious Institutes and Classrooms provide those resources for free.³ However, over nearly five years, the number of U.S. Confucius Classrooms has dropped from more than 500 to currently no more than 16.⁴ Experts have summed up the current state of these programs, saying “[t]he harsh reality is that Confucius Institutes/Confucius Classrooms stepped up to fulfill a need that governments were not—and they were happy to accept a ‘freebie,’ Now that Confucius Institutes have been tainted by wider distaste and suspicion of the Chinese government, this ‘freebie’ now has a cost.”⁵

¹ Combating the Lies of Authoritarians in School Systems, H.R. 1005, 119th Cong. § 2.

² Quoted from the Markup Rep. Kevin Kiley (CA).

³ Lin Yang, *Controversial Confucius Institutes Returning to U.S. Schools Under New Name*, VOA News, (June 27, 2022) <https://www.voanews.com/a/controversial-confucius-institutes-returning-to-u-s-schools-under-new-name/6635906.html>.

⁴ *Confucius Institutes Around the World—2024*, Dig Mandarin (Mar. 20, 2024), <https://www.digmandarin.com/confucius-institutes-around-the-world.html>; Beth Wallis, *Tulsa Public Schools ended Chinese language program weeks before Oklahoma Superintendent’s Congressional testimony*, National Public Radio KOSU (Sept. 29, 2023) <https://www.kosu.org/education/2023-09-29/tulsa-public-schools-ended-chinese-language-program-weeks-before-oklahoma-superintendents-congressional-testimony>; *Little Red Classrooms China’s Infiltration of American K–12 Schools*, Defending Ed. (Jul. 26, 2023) <https://defendinged.org/investigations/little-red-classrooms-china-infiltration-of-american-k-12-schools/>.

⁵ *Id.*

Parents Defending Education (PDE), a right-wing non-profit organization, published a report in July 2023 entitled, “Little Red Classrooms: China’s Infiltration of American K–12 Schools.” The report cites the mere presence of Confucius Institutes, Confucius Classrooms, and related “programming” (including local programming that may have pre-dated the establishment of a Confucius Classroom), sometimes in areas near U.S. military bases, to allege the Classrooms exert undue Chinese influence in America.⁶ Despite the claims in the report, Committee Democratic staff have been unable to locate credible evidence to support either the claims made by the Majority or PDE that there is inappropriate and undue foreign influence in our nation’s K–12 public schools currently as a result of Confucius Classrooms. In 2019, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs’ (HSGAC) Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations held a hearing entitled “China’s Impact on the U.S. Education System”. The hearing was held the day after the HSGAC released a bipartisan staff report with the same title.⁷ While the staff report made recommendations that schools should ensure that Chinese partnership organization’s “vetting, screening and interview processes are aligned with their own hiring protocols and procedures”⁸ and that “the State Department should demand reciprocal and fair treatments of its diplomats and employees in China.”,⁹ the Committee did not find security risks or curriculum vulnerability, as claimed by the Majority.

H.R. 1005 Will Raise Administrative Questions and Concerns for Public Schools

Republicans argue schools should come into compliance with H.R. 1005 without additional financial resources to fund staff, monitor programs, and provide other necessary support to ensure such compliance. The overwhelming majority of K–12 schools are not equipped to identify where their donors are from. For example, a parent who is not yet a U.S. citizen could potentially be “foreign source” or a donation from a local business that is owned by someone who is not a U.S. citizen also could be a “foreign source”. Additionally, many construction and other infrastructure related businesses a school might have common interaction with (e.g., roofing, HVAC) could be “foreign sources” as defined in the bill. However, citizenship information is not a consideration taken by most schools when receiving donations, planning to purchase materials to update buildings, or contracting with companies. If H.R. 1005 were to become law, schools may establish a formal process to ascertain this data. But, without resources to support such formal processes, we can expect to see a general disincentive to contract with, or accept donations from anyone who looks or sounds “foreign”, for fear of losing federal financial assistance.

Additionally, the bill does not mention the roles of local educational agencies (LEAs) and state education agencies (SEAs) in

⁶*Little Red Classrooms China’s Infiltration of American K–12 Schools*, Defending Ed. (Jul. 26, 2023) <https://defendinged.org/investigations/little-red-classrooms-china-infiltration-of-american-k-12-schools/>.

⁷China’s Impact on the U.S. Education System; hearing Before the Subcomm. on Investigations of the S. Comm. on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs, 116th Cong., 80 (2019).

⁸*Id.* at 91.

⁹*Id.* at 92.

this process. Typically, LEAs and SEAs distribute Federal financial assistance to schools in the form of services after they receive funds from ED. The main pathway that has funds move directly from ED to schools is Title I–A, adding to the confusion this bill would bring.¹⁰

H.R. 1005 Does Nothing to Address Current Issues in Public Education

There are real issues facing public education that Americans are concerned about, such as inadequate early childhood education, achievement gaps, teacher shortages, and unfettered access to guns. For example, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, guns are the leading cause of death among children and teens.¹¹ According to data provided by Everytown—a gun violence prevention organization—“[i]n 2023, there were at least 158 incidents of gunfire on school grounds, resulting in 45 deaths and 106 injuries nationally.”¹² However, the Majority chooses to spend its time focusing on issues that do not present challenges for students or the public education system. Foreign influence is not mentioned as a top concern in the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Report on the Condition of Education 2024.¹³ This sort of legislation does not address the root cause of issues that are harming students or assist with helping our students learn. Similar to H.R. 1049, the *Promoting Responsible Oversight to Eliminate Communist Teachings (PROTECT) Act*, and H.R. 1069, the *Transparency in Reporting Adversarial Contributions to Education (TRACE) Act*—two bills also considered in the same markup with H.R. 1005—this bill is a solution in search of a problem and does nothing to benefit students or the public education system.

DEMOCRATIC AMENDMENT OFFERED DURING MARKUP OF H.R. 1005

Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D–VA) put forward an amendment to provide funds to assist with the administrative burden of complying with the bill. Significant effort may need to be expended to investigate existing and new contracts, to determine whether existing or potential business partners are foreign governments or “foreign entities of concern”, to create and maintain systems to keep track of all the new information and respond to inquiries and to train staff in each school on the reporting and compliance requirements of the bill. This amendment authorized \$300 million for fiscal year 2025 and each subsequent fiscal year to carry out the requirements in the bill—providing on average approximately \$3,000 to every public school in America to assist with coming into compliance with H.R. 1005.¹⁴ Committee Republicans rejected this amendment.

¹⁰Fast Facts Title I, Nat’l Cntr For Ed. Statistics <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=158> (last visited Jun. 14, 2024).

¹¹Matt McGough et al., *Child and Teen Firearm Mortality in the U.S. and Peer Countries*, Kaiser Family Foundation (Jul. 18 2024) <https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/issue-brief/child-and-teen-firearm-mortality-in-the-u-s-and-peer-countries/>.

¹²*Gunfire on School Grounds in the United States*, Everytown for Gun Safety, <https://everytownresearch.org/maps/gunfire-on-school-grounds/> (last visited Jun. 14, 2024).

¹³Véronique Irwin, *Report on the Condition of Education 2024*, Nat’l Cntr for Ed. Statistics (May 2024) <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2024/2024144.pdf>.

¹⁴According to the National Center for Education Statistics in the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education, there were 99,388 public elementary and sec-

Representative Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) put forward an amendment designed to ensure the Department of Education, and no other agency, is responsible for overseeing the enforcement of this legislation. Over the past several weeks, President Trump has suggested he will have a plan soon to eliminate the Department of Education, calling into question how this bill would be administered. Yet H.R. 1005 specifically calls for funds that are administered by the Department of Education to be withheld if schools do not comply. Therefore, the Bonamici amendment sought to ensure that the Department be the sole agency empowered to enforce the bill. However, Committee Republicans rejected this amendment on a party-line vote.

CONCLUSION

H.R. 1005 is a solution in search of a problem. While the Majority claims adversarial governments are abusing U.S. laws due to exerting influence through shady financial contributions to public schools; it has not proven any foreign influence even exists. Furthermore, the bill raises a number of administrative questions and concerns for public schools, while doing nothing to address real issues facing public education. For the reasons stated above, we urge the House of Representatives to oppose H.R. 1005.

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT,
Ranking Member.
 MARK DESAULNIER,
 SUMMER L. LEE,
Members of Congress.



ondary schools for the 2022–2023 school year. NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics* tbl. 216.10 (2023), <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23—216.10.asp>. Three hundred million dollars would provide \$3000 per year to each of those schools to offset the costs of compliance. In reality, the administrative burden this bill poses could easily require a full time administrative staff person at each school. Providing a modest salary of \$50,000 to each of those schools for such a position would cost approximately 5 billion dollars.