



Susan Bysiewicz  
SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
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- NEWS RELEASE -

## **BILL CONTAINING NEW CIVICS REQUIREMENT FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS HITS GOVERNOR'S DESK, AWAITS HER SIGNATURE**

### BYSIEWICZ URGES GOV. RELL TO SIGN BILL IN TIME FOR UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR

**Hartford:** Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz is urging Gov. Rell to sign Public Act No. 07-138, An Act Concerning Democracy Education in Elementary Schools, which was delivered from the Secretary of the State's Office to the Governor's Office on Friday June 15, 2007.

The Act, approved by the State House on April 25<sup>th</sup> and unanimously by the State Senate on June 1<sup>st</sup>, would require elementary schools to include in their fourth or fifth grade curriculum, "... a program on democracy in which students engage in a participatory manner in learning about all branches of government." The bill, if signed into law, would be effective July 1, 2007.

"Improving and increasing our civics education is essential if we want our young people to participate in their community and be lifelong voters," said Bysiewicz, who helped create and testified in favor of legislation in 2000 that created the first statewide civics requirement for high school students. "Making an interactive civics curriculum mandatory for all students by the time they finish 5<sup>th</sup> grade is the logical next step."

House Education Committee Chairman Andy Fleischmann (D-West Hartford) wrote House Bill 7017 and has helped promote similar measures the past three sessions of the General Assembly. "I applaud Rep. Fleischman's leadership on this issue," said Bysiewicz. "As Secretary of the

State, I have visited nearly 300 public schools and registered thousands of students to vote, and I have seen firsthand the challenges of getting our young people involved in government. We must engage them early and this new curriculum is a smart way to do it.”

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