Amend HB 69: An Act to Integrate Multicultural Experiences into the NC Standard Course of Study

by Malishai Woodbury, Chair

Winston-Salem Forsyth County Board of Education

America's history is a dynamic and complex chronology of events that provoke a range of emotions, good and bad. On one hand, this chronology highlights the tenacity and pioneer spirit of the Founders, but on the other hand, it reveals the legacy of the genocide of Native populations and slavery of Africans. Our history is about the people's experiences, which are diverse.

House Bill 69 proposes to integrate the education of the Holocaust and genocide into the NC Standard Course of Study. I agree that all students need to know about this atrocity against Jews. Students also need to know about other diverse multicultural experiences in order to fully understand a comprehensive history of our nation. Thus, in order to completely meet the education requirements of all students, HB 69 should be amended to integrate multicultural infusion into the NC Standard Course of Study, which adds all key experiences of the ethnic groups that shaped American and North Carolina history.

The amended bill should also mandate that each NC school district develop a local plan to show how the curriculum will integrate a multicultural perspective. Since our state is also rich with diversity, this will empower school districts to incorporate their local history into the curriculum. These local experiences can be shared and celebrated throughout the state.

One of the common themes that tie together the different experiences of Americans is resilience. America's motto is "E Pluribus Unum, a Latin phrase meaning out of many comes one, which is a strong statement of American determination to form a single identity that is rooted in the complexity of differences. Our state, through resilient and transformative leadership, can rise to the ideals of our democracy by mandating an infusion of multicultural experiences in public school education curriculum.