

103^D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 213

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 30, 1993

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JOINT RESOLUTION

Designating July 2, 1993 and July 2, 1994 as “National Literacy Day”.

Whereas forty-two million Americans today read at a level which is less than necessary for full survival needs;

Whereas there are thirty million adults in the United States who cannot read, whose resources are left untapped, and who are unable to offer their full contribution to society;

Whereas illiteracy is growing rapidly, as two million three hundred thousand persons, including one million two hundred thousand legal and illegal immigrants, one million high school dropouts, and one hundred thousand refugees, are added to the pool of illiterates annually;

Whereas the annual cost of illiteracy to the United States in terms of welfare expenditures, crime, prison expenses, lost revenues, and industrial and military accidents has been estimated at \$225,000,000,000;

Whereas the competitiveness of the United States is eroded by the presence in the workplace of millions of Americans who are functionally or technologically illiterate;

Whereas there is a direct correlation between the number of illiterate adults unable to perform at the standard necessary for available employment and the money allocated to child welfare and unemployment compensation;

Whereas the percentage of illiterates in proportion to population size is higher for blacks and Hispanics, resulting in increased economic and social discrimination against these minorities;

Whereas the prison population represents the single highest concentration of adult illiteracy;

Whereas one million children in the United States between the ages of twelve and seventeen cannot read above a third grade level, 13 per centum of all seventeen-year-olds are functionally illiterate, and 15 per centum of graduates of urban high schools read at less than a sixth grade level;

Whereas 85 per centum of the juveniles who appear in criminal court are functionally illiterate;

Whereas the 47 per centum illiteracy rate among black youths is expected to increase;

Whereas one-half of all heads of households cannot read past the eighth grade level and one-third of all mothers on welfare are functionally illiterate;

