



Dear Teachers of History and Government:

As you plan your Fall 2026 curriculum, we invite you to consider the NSCDA's annual **Congressional Essay Contest topic**. The topic for the 750-word essay this year is

**"The Declaration of Independence famously asserts that governments derive their just powers "from the consent of the governed." How did the Founders address the issue of consent through representation in the Constitution, and do you see the need for any changes today?"**

**Winners receive** full tuition and varying levels of travel support to our 50th annual **"Congressional Seminar," for one week, June 21-26, 2027, in Washington, D.C.** The seminar is an interactive, civic-focused workshop, conducted by NSCDA's long-time non-profit partner, The Workshops Foundation ([workshops.org](http://workshops.org)).

The seminar includes a Mock Congress, enabling students to collaborate with peers from varied backgrounds and views to forge public policy on pressing national and international issues. Participants have the opportunity to exercise their leadership and public-speaking skills. All participants enjoy access to world-class museums, government and congressional offices, and memorable tours. Scholarships cover the cost of university campus housing and meals, along with an additional per diem for lunches on tours off campus.

Your students may enter the contest in one of two ways:

- You assign the essay topic and select as many as 10 top essays to be submitted with students' completed applications (see <https://nscda.org/grants-and-scholarships/congressional-essay-contest/>) to your local Corporate Society of The Colonial Dames.

**OR**

- Students may submit their own applications and essays directly online at the NSCDA Drop box (accessible at <https://nscda.org/grants-and-scholarships/congressional-essay-contest/>)

Please print and post [the contest poster](#), providing submission instructions and highlighting the benefits of the contest.

**The deadline for submissions is December 1, 2026.** For any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time. We hope to receive your students' thoughtful essays.

Best regards,  
Susan Sheeren  
Congressional Essay Contest Vice Chair  
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