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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8037

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State of Washington 57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Senators West, Brown, Winsley, Sheahan and McAuliffe

Read first time 01/31/2002. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE SECRETARY OF THE  
5 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
8 represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, Infants and toddlers from birth to the age of three with  
10 developmental delays and special needs are our most vulnerable  
11 population; and

12 WHEREAS, Research shows that early intervention to assess their  
13 needs and initiate intensive, effective therapy can change and improve  
14 such a child's ability to function throughout his or her life; and

15 WHEREAS, Washington State through research and demonstration at the  
16 University of Washington and the state's seventeen Neurodevelopmental  
17 Centers has been the leader in assessment and remediation for  
18 developmentally delayed infants and toddlers for more than forty years;  
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Therapy before the age of three at one of Washington  
21 State's excellent Neurodevelopmental Centers results in a significant

1 percentage of children who need no further intervention or special  
2 services provided at federal, state, local, and private expense; and

3 WHEREAS, Basing early intervention services on an itinerant model  
4 will reduce the amount of specialized services for each child and  
5 family; and

6 WHEREAS, Serving all developmentally delayed children outside of  
7 centers will more than double the cost to federal, state, local, and  
8 private sources; and

9 WHEREAS, Inclusion for developmentally delayed children in their  
10 families, schools, and communities is now and has always been the goal  
11 of assessment and treatment for Washington State's seventeen  
12 Neurodevelopmental Centers; and

13 WHEREAS, Support and education of parents, families, and caregivers  
14 has been a major component of treatment for children with developmental  
15 delays at Washington State's seventeen Neurodevelopmental Centers; and

16 WHEREAS, Parent choice for the assessment and treatment of their  
17 children is an inalienable right; and

18 WHEREAS, Wording for the original Education for All Act of 1975,  
19 now known as Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is  
20 taken directly from legislation enacted in Washington State in 1971 (HB  
21 90); and

22 WHEREAS, Wording in the amended IDEA takes away parent choice of  
23 assessment and treatment for their developmentally delayed children in  
24 Neurodevelopmental Centers such as the seventeen model  
25 Neurodevelopmental Centers in Washington State which have successfully  
26 served thousands of children for more than forty years with a  
27 constantly improving program;

28 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that Congress,  
29 through its process to reauthorize IDEA, modify the wording regarding  
30 "natural environments" to allow for parent choice for assessment and  
31 treatment of their developmentally delayed infants and toddlers at a  
32 Neurodevelopmental Center such as the seventeen outstanding  
33 Neurodevelopmental Centers serving children and families in Washington  
34 State.

35 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
36 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United  
37 States, the Secretary of the Department of Education, the President of

1 the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
2 and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

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