

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8038

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education, February 1, 2006

Brief Description: Petitioning Congress to raise funding levels of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Pridemore, Kohl-Welles, Shin, Berkey, Weinstein, Kline and Rasmussen; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 2/1/06 [DP, DNP, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING, K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Weinstein, Vice Chair, Early Learning & K-12; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Delvin, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen and Rockefeller.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Carrell.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Pflug and Schoesler.

Staff: Ingrid Mungia (786-7423)

Background: In 2001, Congress amended and reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The amended ESEA is known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Under the NCLB, students must be assessed against state standards in reading/language arts and mathematics in each of grades three through eight, plus at least one assessment of these subjects for high school students. Science will be added to the requirements in the 2007-08 school year.

Washington must report annually on the percentage of students achieving at grade level on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), at the school, district, and state level. The data from these reports is used to determine whether a school, a district, or the state has achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward federal goals. An increasing percentage of students must pass the WASL each year in order to make AYP.

In addition to AYP requirements, the NCLB defines the qualifications needed by teachers and paraprofessionals who work in classroom instruction. It requires that states develop plans to achieve the goal that all teachers of core academic subjects be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-06 school year. States must include in their annual plans measurable objectives that

schools and districts must meet in moving toward the goal and must report on their progress in the annual report cards.

Summary of Bill: Request that the United States President and Congress raise authorized funding levels, fully fund the law at those levels, and improve language and regulations concerning implementation, time, and flexibility of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Testimony For: It is the appropriate time to send a message to Congress that we need to increase the funding and flexibility of No Child Left Behind. Other groups have sent resolutions to Congress regarding their concerns with the implementation of the federal law. This Senate Joint Memorial focuses on students with limited English proficiency. The federal act imposes significant costs to districts. Permitting testing flexibility would allow schools to use different assessment systems. The No Child Left Behind Act is up for re-authorization next year and there needs to be fixes to the law.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Karen Davis, WEA; Leslie Goldstein, OSPI.