

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSJM 8011

---

---

As Passed Legislature

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

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Clements, Rasmussen, Eide, Oemig, Sheldon, Shin, Kline and Tom; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction).

**Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education**  
**House Committee on Education**

**Background:** A joint memorial is a message or petition addressed to the President and/or Congress of the United States, or the head of any other agency of the federal or state government, asking for consideration of some matter of concern to the state or region.

In 2001, Congress authorized the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the President signed it into law on January 8, 2002. NCLB directed states to establish standards for what all students should know in reading, math, and science. States are required to administer assessments, aligned with the standards, in reading and math for all students in grades three through eight, and one high school grade. Beginning in 2007-08, science must be assessed in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school. Additionally, states must participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) sampling of fourth and eighth graders, if the Department of Education pays the costs of administering the NAEP.

Under NCLB, all schools and school districts must ensure that all students are making adequate yearly progress (AYP) such that all students will meet the state standards on the state assessments by 2014. Schools and school districts receiving Title I dollars but not achieving AYP will be identified for improvement or corrective actions, including developing an improvement plan, offering students the option to transfer with transportation provided, and providing supplemental educational services from a state-approved provider chosen by the parents.

Additionally, NCLB required states to develop a plan to ensure that all teachers in core academic subjects are highly qualified. Para-professionals in Title I programs must have a high school diploma or GED, and must have two years of study at an institution of higher education or pass a state or local assessment of math, reading, and writing.

The NCLB may be subject to reauthorization in 2007.

**Summary:** The President, Congress, and the Governor of Washington State are asked to work together with state legislatures to raise the authorized funding levels of the NCLB and to make improvements to address the issues raised in the memorial.

Washington supports all students achieving at high levels and welcomes the focus on quality education brought by NCLB. However, the reauthorization provides an opportunity for essential changes.

Among the issues raised:

- Limited English proficient students should not be included in overall accountability for at least three years.
- Students with disabilities need appropriate assessments not limited to their grade level.
- The uniform bar of performance by all students should be replaced by realistic requirements for continuous improvement.
- Unless appropriate funding is provided for annual large-scale assessments, states should be allowed to assess in selected years rather than annually. Even if funding is available, states should be able to use a variety of ways of assessing progress.
- The AYP provisions are overly prescriptive and rigid.
- States need flexibility in meeting the "highly qualified" requirements for teachers.
- The NCLB imposes significant costs to the state, local school districts, teachers, and paraprofessionals.
- Career and technical education teachers certified by industry but without a bachelor's degree are at a disadvantage because under the federal No Child Left Behind Act these teachers are not considered "highly qualified."

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	42	0	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	46	0	(Senate concurred)