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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ REPT. 107-63
Part 1 }

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ON

H.R. 1

together with

ADDITIONAL AND DISSENTING VIEWS

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]



MAY 14, 2001.—Ordered to be printed

ADDITIONAL VIEWS TO H.R. 1

We commend the Committee on Education and the Workforce for reporting a bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that will reach the House floor with broad bipartisan support. With its focus on high standards for all children and results-based accountability, the bill seeks to build upon lessons learned since the previous reauthorization in 1994. Moreover, H.R. 1 provides better targeting to reach these goals and authorizes additional resources for these purposes.

Notwithstanding the many virtues of H.R. 1, we remain concerned that the bill goes too far in its reliance on standardized testing. Recent years have seen a growing trend in education policy toward more standardized testing of students at all levels of their education despite uncertain scientific evidence that the tests currently in use are fair and accurate. In fact, studies have consistently shown that many popular standardized tests are poorly designed, may be discriminatory toward poor and minority students, and are not sufficiently aligned to the content taught in schools. Furthermore, we have not to date had an appropriate national evaluation of the trade-offs increased testing requires in other aspects of the curriculum. With more and more time being devoted to preparation for standardized tests, many schools have been forced to sharply curtail their offerings in civics, social studies, and the arts. We would argue that reductions in these subjects deprive students of vital components in a balanced education.

Given these realities, the testing provisions in H.R. 1 raise questions. With its requirement of annual testing in grades 3 through 8, the bill significantly expands the number and scope of standardized tests in our schools. It does so without fully addressing the cost these tests exact in dollars at the local level, in their impact on the quality of education in our schools, or in the psychological effects of yearly testing on our students. Further, H.R. 1 does not provide adequate assurances that the tests being given will be fair and accurate. By allowing states to substitute their own assessments for the National Assessment of Educational Progress as a benchmark against which to judge their annual tests in reading and mathematics, H.R. 1, offers no student performance. A bill of such scope, with such profound importance in the lives of our nation's children should confront these issues more directly and realistically than H.R. 1, as reported, does. We will continue to work to address these concerns as the legislation moves forward.

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