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## Federal Legislation

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# Federal Legislation

## S. 407 — NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SCHOOL FINANCE TO MEET THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL GOALS ACT

S. 407 was introduced on February 18, 1993 to create an independent agency of the executive branch that will study how to uniformly improve the quality of education nationally. After introduction, the bill was referred to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. This bill recognizes the inequities of state education systems throughout the country. It also recognizes that the nation will benefit in many ways from educating its children. The bill proposes an independent agency entitled The National Commission on School Finance to Meet the National Educational Goals. The Commission will have twelve members selected by the President and various members of Congress. The duties of the Commission will be to study, investigate, and synthesize various materials in order to determine how to meet national educational goals. The Commission will consider, among other things, the fiscal capacities of the states and the efforts currently being made by state and local agencies. The Commission will report its findings and recommendations to Congress within twelve months of the date of enactment.

## H.R. 538 — THE CLASSROOM SAFETY ACT OF 1993

H.R. 538 was introduced on January 21, 1993 to prevent and reduce violent crimes in elementary and secondary schools by providing federal assistance to local educational agencies. On the date of its introduction it was referred to the House Education and Labor Committee. The bill addresses the problems associated with the dramatic increase of violent crimes in elementary and secondary schools. The bill recognizes that local agencies are ill-equipped to handle these problems independently. The bill will charge the Secretary of Education with writing a manual on classroom safety to be provided upon request and will authorize the Secretary to make grants to school districts most affected by crime and violence. The grants made by the Secretary would be used for counseling and funding crime prevention measures and equipment. To receive assistance an agency would submit an application adequately asserting a need for the assistance. The application would be required to include a comprehensive plan describing how the money would be used, as well as an assessment of whether the local agency could receive additional funding from a local

source. In determining which agencies would receive grants, the Secretary would consider each applicant's crime problem, needs and abilities, and population. Any agency receiving a grant would submit yearly reports to the Secretary. The Secretary, in turn, would submit a report to Congress each year.

#### H.R. 11 — UNIVERSAL STUDENT NUTRITION ACT OF 1993

H.R. 11 was introduced on January 5, 1993 to establish an optional breakfast program to be offered at no cost to students who qualify for the national free school lunch program. Following its introduction, this bill was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

The proposal would amend the National School Lunch Act by allowing schools that already take part in that program to also offer free breakfasts to qualifying children. Any school already participating in the free lunch program would be eligible — but not required — to take part in this program.

The cost of providing breakfast would be defrayed by the federal government. The amount to be paid to schools for each breakfast served would be equal to the national average cost of producing a school breakfast as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Furthermore, any breakfast food served by schools would have to meet dietary guidelines developed by the U.S.D.A.

The national school lunch program currently serves approximately 25 million students per day, while existing school breakfast programs feed about 4 million students daily. Sponsors of the bill estimate there are an additional 4 million students eligible to take part in breakfast programs. Sponsors also say the bill is "vital to protecting the health and well-being of the Nation's children." This proposal, if adopted, must be implemented by July 1, 2000.

#### H.R. 90 — WORKFORCE READINESS ACT OF 1993

H.R. 90 was introduced on January 5, 1993 to establish a national workforce board which would develop a list of skills that students should have upon entering the workforce after completing high school. Following its introduction, the bill was referred to the Committee on Labor and Education.

This proposal would establish a 23-member National Board on Workforce Skills for the 21st Century, which would oversee the development of voluntary national standards for workplace skills. The board would work with employers and educators to determine what skills students should have upon completion of high school to allow them to

compete in the workforce and would research methods for integrating the teaching of these skills into existing curricula.

The measure would also authorize the board to make grants to local education agencies to develop, implement or expand programs which integrate workplace skills into the regular school curriculum. To receive grants, local agencies would have to submit an application to the Secretary of Education.

The grants would be used for development and implementation of comprehensive school-to-work transition programs. These programs would be required to provide students such things as opportunities for worksite visits, the use of business technologies in the classroom, and the availability of career guidance counselors to assist with job placement or further education. This proposal calls for a \$100 million appropriation for fiscal year 1993, ninety-five percent of which would have to be used for grants to local education agencies.

#### H.R. 1795 — SEXUAL HARASSMENT FREE SCHOOLS ACT

H.R. 1795 was introduced on April 21, 1993 as an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to assist schools and educational institutions in the elimination of sexual harassment and abuse. After introduction, the bill was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

The bill proposes altering the language of the original act so that it now promotes a school environment free of sexual harassment and abuse. The bill also proposes the development and implementation of programs addressing sexual harassment.

#### H.R. 1454 — NATIONAL SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION AND YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP ACT OF 1993

H.R. 1454 was introduced on March 24, 1993 to provide for the development of workplace readiness competencies and voluntary national industry-recognized skills standards, and to promote school-to-work transition and youth apprenticeships. After introduction, the bill was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

This bill proposes the establishment of an Interagency Compact on Workforce Preparation (Compact) to carry out activities to improve the workforce. The purpose of this title is to identify workplace readiness competencies which employers agree are necessary for all graduating students and to aid in the development and adoption of national industry-recognized skill standards.

The bill also establishes a National Advisory Group on Workforce Skills (Advisory Group) to provide recommendations to the Compact on workplace readiness competencies and their incorporation into the academic and work-based curriculum. The Advisory Group would also provide advice to the Compact on the establishment of industry partnerships for the development, implementation, maintenance, and advocacy of national skill standards, so that the Compact may identify and provide technical assistance, staffing, research capabilities, and any other form of assistance determined to be appropriate to those industries for the establishment of partnerships.

The title provides for grants to partnerships for the development of voluntary national industry-recognized skill standards. A partnership wishing to receive such a grant would be required to submit an application to the Compact and to report to the Compact within three years after receiving the grant.

States would also be allowed to receive grants to develop school-to-work transition and youth apprenticeship programs and services that provide youths with education, competencies, and skills necessary to make successful transitions from school to work and into further education and training activities which are directly related to particular occupations. A state would also be required to submit an application to the Compact and report to the Compact at the end of each fiscal year.

#### H.R. 1831 — GENDER EQUITY IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

This bill was introduced on April 22, 1993 to establish gender equity training programs for teachers, education personnel, and the community, to ensure gender equity primarily in educational programs, and for other purposes as well. This bill is to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Any local educational agency demonstrating a substantial disparity in participation or achievement between male and female students would provide a description of planned efforts to implement gender equity training for Chapter 1 personnel.

The gender equity training is to demonstrate to parents and education personnel other than teachers the impact of gender role socialization on the educational needs of eligible children and the use of equitable educational practices. This training is provided for in the sections of the Act dealing with the uses of funds and the awarding of grants.

The programs would include those that eliminate gender bias in instruction and educational materials, those programs that identify and analyze gender inequities in education, and those that implement and evaluate educational policies and practices designed to achieve gender equity.

The bill specifically mentions gender equity training in such areas as mathematics, science, computer-use and computer learning styles, and gifted and talented children programs.

#### H.R. 987 — GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT OF 1993

H.R. 987 was introduced on February 18, 1993 to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require each state, as a condition of receiving federal assistance under such Act, to implement a gun control program in its schools, and to establish a program of grants to local educational agencies for purposes of purchasing crime prevention equipment and training security personnel. After introduction, the bill was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

This bill proposes that no assistance may be provided to any local educational agency under this title unless the agency has in effect a policy requiring the expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year of any student who is determined to have brought a gun, knife, or other weapon to a school under the jurisdiction of the agency.

Each local educational agency provided assistance from funds made available to the state under this Act shall furnish to the state, in the application requesting assistance, the assurance that the local educational agency has in effect the policy required by this amendment. It shall also provide a description of the circumstances surrounding any expulsions imposed under the policy, including the name of the school, the number of students expelled from that school, and the type of weapons concerned.

Further, this bill provides that the Secretary of Education is authorized to make grants to local educational agencies for purposes of purchasing crime prevention equipment, including metal detectors, and training security personnel. Local educational agencies that wish to receive grants under this section are required to submit applications as specified by the Secretary of Education.

The same bill was introduced into the Senate as S. 854 on April 29, 1993.

#### H.R. 1113 — PUBLIC SCHOOL REDEFINITION ACT OF 1993

H.R. 1113 was introduced on February 24, 1993 to establish a demonstration program encouraging state educational agencies to assist teachers, parents, and communities in establishing new and more effective public schools. After introduction, the bill was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

This bill provides that the Secretary of Education is authorized to make grants to state educational agencies to allow agencies to conduct a charter

public school program. State education agencies that wish to receive grants under this title are required to submit applications as specified by the Secretary of Education. If a state elects not to participate in the program, the Secretary of Education is authorized to award a grant, as permitted by state laws and regulations, to a charter public school that serves such state and has had an application approved as specified by the Secretary of Education.

Grants made available under this title are to be used to plan and implement charter public schools. While the grants may be used for equipment purchases, start-up costs and minor renovation of facilities necessary to meet applicable health and safety requirements, they may not be used for construction or major renovation or repair of facilities. State educational agencies may not reserve more than five percent of grant funds for administrative expenses, and a charter public school may not receive a grant for more than three years. Further, a charter public school must provide matching funds in the amount of ten percent of the grant payment in the first year and twenty-five percent in the second and third years. A charter public school receiving grants through a state educational agency is to report annually to that state educational agency. A charter public school receiving funds directly from the Secretary of Education and a state educational agency is to report annually to the Secretary of Education.

#### H.R. 485 — PARENTS AS TEACHERS: THE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION ACT OF 1993

H.R. 485 was introduced on January 6, 1993 to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to states to pay federal cost shares for parents-as-teachers programs. The purpose of the bill is to encourage states to develop and expand parent and early childhood education programs. It declares the Secretary shall give special consideration to "hard-to-serve" populations and lists some examples. Population size, area, and financial resources should be considered in determining grants.

States receiving grants are required to provide parent education programs that include developmental screening. Each such state must designate an agency to administer the program, such administration to include hiring parent educators, establishing a minimum number of meetings, conducting screening, and establishing recruitment and retention programs. A grant may serve a family only for the period of time beginning with the last three months of the mother's pregnancy and ending when the child is three years of age.

The bill requires the Secretary to establish a Parents as Teachers National Center to disseminate information and provide assistance to states

establishing these programs. The Secretary must also complete an evaluation of the programs within four years.

States desiring grants must submit an application to the Secretary describing the activities and services for which assistance is sought and any other reasonable requirements. The Secretary shall pay the federal share of the cost of the activities described in approved applications. The federal share shall be one hundred percent for the first two years and seventy-five, fifty, and twenty-five percent for the third, fourth, and fifth years, respectively. The bill appropriates \$20,000,000 for each fiscal year 1993-1997 inclusive to carry out the Act.

### H.R. 453 — EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 1993

H.R. 453 was introduced on January 6, 1993 to establish a national demonstration program providing increased flexibility for schools. After introduction, the bill was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

The bill's purpose is to allow schools and other recipients of Federal resources more flexibility in exchange for greater accountability, with particular emphasis on disadvantaged individuals. The bill proposes waiver of certain statutory or regulatory requirements that the Secretary determines may impede the meeting of special needs most effectively. Waiver authority is vested in the Secretary and, if the Secretary agrees, in the heads of other affected federal agencies. Waiver possibilities extend to elementary and secondary schools and other service providers, and are to encompass no more than six states and no more than fifty local agencies within them that have implemented comprehensive regulatory reform plans.

The projects and associated waivers shall last no longer than three years, although two-year extensions are possible if substantial progress has been made. The Secretary may also terminate projects and waivers upon determining unacceptable progress. Agency heads may extend or regulate waivers upon determining unacceptable progress. Agency heads may extend or regulate waivers, but the Secretary has exclusive authority over projects.

Local agencies wishing to conduct a project must submit an application to the state educational agency, which must approve it and then forward it to the Secretary. Applications must be submitted within two years of enactment and include a plan which describes, among other things, overall purpose, programs included and regulations waived, specific goals, gubernatorial comments, and descriptions of student population in some cases. The bill also lists what the Secretary shall consider in evaluating applications.

Guidelines for allocation of federal funds must accord with requirements, except that some discretion remains with the Secretary. The bill also lists some exceptions where waivers are inapplicable.

Each project must submit an annual report to the Secretary, and the Secretary must submit a report to Congress every two years. After not more than six years, the Secretary must provide Congress with an independent evaluation of projects, as well as evaluations by the Department of Education and other affected Federal agencies. The bill shall not be applied to increase total funding obligations.