

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

October 21, 1999
(House)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

(THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN COORDINATED BY OMB WITH THE CONCERNED AGENCIES.)

H.R. 2300 - Academic Achievement for All Act (Straight A's Act)
(Rep. Goodling (R) PA and 128 Others)

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 2300, as reported by the Committee on Education and the Workforce. In addition, the Administration opposes simply limiting this proposal to ten States because that would not address the fundamental flaws in this legislation. If the bill were presented to the President, his senior advisers would recommend that he veto it.

H.R. 2300 would effectively permit States to convert a wide array of Federal education programs that address national priorities into a single block grant program providing general aid for education. The bill would thus undermine the Federal Government's commitment to help local communities raise educational standards and educational achievement for all students, reduce class size, improve the quality of teaching, put a computer in every classroom, make schools free from drugs and violence, and promote family literacy. These efforts have been proven successful in helping schools to improve.

Block grants would replace these worthy and targeted efforts with general aid, without providing adequate mechanisms to: (1) hold States and communities accountable for their use of taxpayer funds; (2) hold schools and school systems accountable for results; and (3) give the Administration and Congress information with which to evaluate the block grant program's performance. The bill would not target funds to school districts and schools, or for educational services, that most warrant Federal assistance, and it would not ensure that funds are actually used for classroom instruction. The bill would also open the door for Federal funds to be spent on private and religious school tuition. The Administration's position on this issue is well known.

The Administration is pleased that the House is working to improve and reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The Administration urges the House to reject the block grant approach of H.R. 2300 and, instead, work towards adopting the ESEA reauthorization legislation as proposed by the President in his Educational Excellence for All Children Act of 1999.

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SENATE A'S

Date
(House)

H.R. 2300 - Academic Achievement for All Act
(Rep. Goodling (R) PA and 124 Others)

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 2300, as reported by the Committee on Education and the Workforce. If the bill were presented to the President, his senior advisers would recommend that he veto it.

H.R. 2300 would effectively permit States to convert a wide array of Federal education programs that address national priorities into a single block grant program providing general aid for education. The appropriate Federal role in education has been to provide leadership on national priorities, which include helping States and school districts raise educational standards and educational achievement for all students, improving the quality of teaching, bringing the benefits of technology to our Nation's students, and promoting family literacy.

Block grants would replace these worthy and targeted efforts with general aid, without providing adequate mechanisms to: (1) hold States and communities accountable for their use of taxpayer funds; (2) hold schools and school systems accountable for results; and (3) give the Administration and Congress information with which to evaluate the block grant program's performance. The bill would neither target funds to school districts and schools, or for educational services, that most warrant Federal assistance, nor would it ensure that funds are actually used for classroom instruction.

The Administration is pleased that the House has begun its work to improve and reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Administration urges the House to reject the block grant approach of H.R. 2300 and, instead, work towards adoption of ESEA reauthorization legislation as proposed by the President in his Educational Excellence for All Children Act of 1999.

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