

Education

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Education

No Child Left Behind

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No Child Left Behind

H.R.2668

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Title: To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to reduce class size through the use of fully qualified teachers, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Wu, David](#) [4] [D-OR-1] (introduced 6/11/2007) Cosponsors (19)

Latest Major Action: 7/24/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Highlights: Allots funds to states and local educational agencies to recruit, hire, and train additional teachers, in order to: (1) reduce class sizes nationally, in grades one through three, to an average of 18 students per classroom; and (2) improve teaching in those grades so that all students can learn to read independently and well by the end of the third grade.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports class size reduction.

Public Law No: 107-110 (January 8, 2002)

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Title: To close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind.

The *No Child Left Behind Act* purpose is to improve student achievement by setting a goal of full grade-level proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014. It also aims to close the achievement gap

ASPIRA's Policy Position :

ASPIRA's concerns include:

1. standardized tests may not be properly monitored to ensure that they reflect the standards;
2. assessment results should be used for improvement and not to penalize schools/students;
3. ELL Students should take the same tests as all other students take in school regardless of proficiency to assess their progress and that of the school in serving this population;
4. assessments should measure the progress of students year over year. They should not be used to compare different cohorts to determine AYP.
5. underfunding for NCLB imposes a higher bar for students and schools to reach without the means to achieve at high levels. Lack of resources, such as highly prepared and experienced teachers and educational resources, means schools that Latino children attend are often ranked as "failing" and hence will lose further funding.

S.1775 No Child Left Behind Act of 2007

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Title: A bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that no child is left behind.

Sponsor: [Sen Burr, Richard](#) [7] [R-NC] (introduced 7/12/2007) Cosponsors (1)

Latest Major Action: 7/12/2007 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. **Highlights:** Permits states to: (1) use alternate academic achievement standards for disabled students; (2) incorporate student academic growth into calculations of adequate yearly progress (AYP); and (3) determine AYP for limited English proficient (LEP) students by excluding new arrivals and including former LEP students. Increases funds available for teaching, and developing enhanced assessments for, disabled and LEP children. Replaces the School Dropout Prevention program with the Secondary School Graduation grant program, to identify and provide remedial education to at-risk students, prepare students for college, and offer them work-based and experiential learning experiences.

Grant eligibility: State receive the funding for the Secondary School Graduation grants, and must distribute 85% of the money as subgrants to Local Education Agencies. The subgrants will be no more than \$10,000 for one year, nonrenewable.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA opposes the measure to exclude any ELL or Special Education students from accountability testing. ASPIRA is concerned that excluding ELL students from regular assessments to ascertain the school's yearly progress will lead to ELL students being segregated and not tested, outside of the school accountability system and therefore underserved by the school. Other –non-accountability- measures should be used to guide services to these students. ASPIRA supports using academic growth of individual students to determine adequate yearly progress.

ASPIRA supports the Secondary School Graduation grant program, but opposes the funding and time limitations proposed in the legislation.

H.R.1711 Flexibility in Assessments for Individuals Reform Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [8] to post comments

Title: To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to improve certain accountability and assessment provisions.

Sponsor: [Rep Hooley, Darlene](#) [9] [D-OR-5] (introduced 3/27/2007) Cosponsors (4)

Latest Major Action: 6/27/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Highlights: Amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to alter requirements regarding state assessments of whether students are making adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward academic achievement standards by allowing states to: (1) track AYP on a longitudinal basis; (2) permit disabled students and students for religious reasons to opt out of the assessments; (3) reschedule assessments for students who for specified reasons cannot attend scheduled assessments; and (4) count disabled students who graduate from secondary school within reasonable periods of time in favorable AYP graduation rates. Includes students in the limited-English proficient subgroup for three school years after they attain English proficiency, when determining whether the subgroup has made AYP. Requires limited-English proficient students to be included in English proficiency assessments if they have attended U.S. schools for more than five consecutive years. (Currently, they are subject to such assessments after attending U.S. schools for three or more consecutive years.)

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA opposes flexibility in assessing limited English proficient students to determine school Adequate Yearly Progress. (See above)

H.R.2289 Striving Readers Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [10] to post comments

Title: To establish an adolescent literacy program.

Sponsor: [Rep Yarmuth, John A.](#) [11] [D-KY-3] (introduced 5/14/2007) Cosponsors (40)

Latest Major Action: 7/17/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness. **Highlights:** Allots funds to State Educational Agencies (SEAs) on the basis of their relative proportion of needy children aged 5 to 17 and eighth graders underachieving in reading. Requires SEAs, in addition to providing subgrants, to use grant funds to: (1) provide professional development assistance to LEAs; (2) enhance public higher education for students preparing to teach any of grades 4 through 12; (3) recommend improvements to state licensure and certification standards for reading instruction in such grades; and (4) report to the Secretary of Education on SEA and LEA progress in improving adolescent literacy.

Grant eligibility: State Education Agencies may receive grants, and may disperse subgrants to local education agencies, to address the literacy needs of children with disabilities, and students who are learning English proficient. Priority is given to LEAs serving children below the poverty level. Appropriations for this Act start at \$2 million in 2008 and increase by \$2 million each year thru 2012.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports adolescent literacy programs. ASPIRA supports the inclusion of non-profit organizations (in addition to LEA's) in the program.

ASPIRA is concerned that the size of the authorization (\$2 million) is inadequate to address the growing needs of adolescent limited English proficient students.

Higher Education Act

- [Log in](#) [12] to post comments

Higher Education Act

H.R.3927

- [Log in](#) [13] to post comments

Title: To temporarily extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Miller, George](#) [14] [CA-7] (introduced 10/23/2007) Cosponsors (3)

Latest Major Action: 10/23/2007 Passed/agreed to in House. Status: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill Agreed to by voice vote.

Highlights: This bill would extend the Higher Education Act thru April 30, 2008.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA support programs that encourage postsecondary education. This legislation only extends the existing program until next year when Congress will consider full reauthorization of the Act.

ASPIRA will follow the reauthorization closely.

Head Start

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Head Start

H.R.1429 Head Start for School Readiness Act

- [Log in](#) [16] to post comments

To reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Kildee, Dale E.](#) [17] [D-MI-5] (introduced 3/9/2007) Cosponsors (26)

Related Bills: [H.RES.348](#) [18], [S.556](#) [19]

House Reports: [110-67](#) [20]

Latest Major Action: 6/19/2007 Resolving differences -- Senate actions. Status: Senate insists on its amendment, asks for a conference. **Highlights:** Includes children's growth in language, preliteracy, premathematics, emotional, and physical skills among the aims of Head Start programs. Authorizes appropriations for Head Start programs for FY2008-FY2012, with specified amounts for research, demonstration, and evaluation activities, including longitudinal studies and impact studies. Raises from below the poverty line to 130% of the poverty line the family income threshold for a child's eligibility to participate in Head Start programs. Requires priority to be given, however, to serving those below the poverty level.

Provides funds for training of Head Start personnel in addressing the unique needs of disabled children and their families, migrant and seasonal farmworker families, LEP families, and homeless families.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports expansion of Head Start services and the purpose of the legislation. ASPIRA is concerned that the annual appropriation for the program may not allow it to achieve the proposed intent or that adding components (such as research, demonstration and evaluation activities) may undercut funding for program implementation.

ASPIRA is also concerned about the potential burden of these new activities on existing programs.

H.R.1630 Head Start Accountability Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [21] to post comments

Title: To amend the Head Start Act to provide greater accountability for Head Start agencies.

Sponsor: [Rep Putnam, Adam H.](#) [22] [R-FL-12] (introduced 3/21/2007) Cosponsors (None)

Latest Major Action: 6/27/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Highlights: Head Start Accountability Act of 2007 - Amends the Head Start Act to require additional accountability measures for Head Start agencies, including: (1) agency designation period limits; (2) revised redesignation priorities; (3) local oversight boards; (4) revised administrative and financial management standards; (5) delegate agency evaluations and corrective actions; (6) shorter deadlines for agency corrective actions; (7) revised notice and hearing procedures for assistance suspensions, terminations, or reductions; and (8) annual audits. Prohibits recipients from using Head Start assistance to appeal any decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services under the Act.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA opposes the measure. ASPIRA recognizes the need for accountability in Head Start and supports the current accountability system. However, ASPIRA opposes further accountability measures which will draw resources from actual services and will create a new layer of bureaucracy further burdening programs.

ASPIRA recognizes that the research on Head Start over the past decades clearly demonstrate its effectiveness.

Teachers

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Teachers

H.R.1828 Teaching Fellows Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [24] to post comments

Title: To establish a national teaching fellowship program to encourage individuals to enter and remain in the field of teaching at public schools.

Sponsor: [Rep Price, David E.](#) [25] [D-NC-4] (introduced 3/29/2007) Cosponsors (18)

Latest Major Action: 7/9/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness.

Highlights: Provides for scholarships: (1) under the Teaching program for high school seniors and second-year college students to encourage them to enter the teaching field and become career educators; and (2) under the Partnership program for individuals, such as paraprofessional educational personnel and others currently in the education field, to complete a bachelor's degree with a state license or certification to teach through partnerships among associate- and bachelor-degree-granting institutions.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports increasing teaching workforce and enhancing the quality of teachers.

S.2212 Teachers Professional Development Institutes Act

- [Log in](#) [26] to post comments

Title: A bill to support the establishment and operations of Teachers Professional Development Institutes.

Sponsor: [Sen Lieberman, Joseph I.](#) [27] [CT] (introduced 10/19/2007) Cosponsors (1)

Latest Major Action: 10/19/2007 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. **Highlights:** The secretary is authorized to award grants to encourage the establishment and operation of Teachers Institutes to serve low-income populations; and to provide technical assistance, either directly or through the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, to assist local educational agencies and institutions of higher education in preparing to establish and in operating Teachers Institutes.

Grant eligibility: Grants can be made to Teacher Institutes, which are defined as partnerships between institutes of higher education and local educational agencies with significant low-income populations, intended to improve the quality of teaching and learning through collaborative seminars designed to enhance both the subject matter and the pedagogical resources of the seminar participants.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports quality professional development for teachers.

However, ASPIRA is concerned that the direct mention of the Yale-New Haven Teacher Institute (in the Senators state of CT) provides it a special status and will limit the choice of TA providers directing a significant portion of the TA to that Institute.

Dropout Prevention

- [Log in](#) [28] to post comments

Dropout Prevention

H.R.887 Graduation Really Achieves Dreams Act or the GRAD Act

- [Log in](#) [29] to post comments

Title: To provide for Project GRAD programs, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep McCarthy, Carolyn](#) [30] [D-NY-4] (introduced 2/7/2007) Cosponsors (15)

Latest Major Action: 6/5/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education. **Highlights:** A grant to Project GRAD USA, a nonprofit educational organization for improving high school graduation and college attendance and completion rates for disadvantaged students, to provide technical assistance and support through subgrants to existing and new programs that implement a set of integrated education reform services. Requires the grantee to select only subgrantees that serve a substantial number or percentage of low-income students.

Grant eligibility: A grant can be awarded to a nonprofit educational organization that has as its primary purpose the improvement of secondary school graduation and college attendance and completion rates for disadvantaged students, to implement and sustain the integrated education reform services.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports programs that promote high school graduation rates especially in low-income communities.

ASPIRA is concerned, however, that directing funds to a single entity (Project GRAD USA) to provide subgrants, rather than providing for a direct grant program, offers this entity with a special status. ASPIRA supports a direct grant program with the same purpose.

H.R.3406 Success in the Middle Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [31] to post comments

Title: To provide grants to States to ensure that all students exit the middle grades prepared for success in a high school with an academically rigorous curriculum that prepares students for postsecondary education and the workplace.

Sponsor: [Rep Grijalva, Raul M.](#) [32] [D-AZ-7] (introduced 8/3/2007) Cosponsors (11)

Latest Major Action: 9/19/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education. **Highlights:** Grants will be made to each approved State educational agency. At least 80 percent of the grant funds awarded under this title to a State educational agency shall be used to make subgrants to local educational agencies. The middle school improvement plan of a State educational

agency shall be a statewide plan to improve student achievement that describes what students are required to know and do to successfully complete the middle grades and make the transition to succeed in an academically rigorous high school that prepares students for postsecondary education and the workplace.

Grant eligibility: Funds will be allotted among the States in proportion to the number of children, aged 5 to 17, who reside within each State and are from families with incomes below the poverty line. Grants to State education agencies will not be less than \$20 million. Subgrants will be made to local education agencies such as an institution of higher education, an education service agency, and any non-profit organization with demonstrated expertise in high quality middle level interventions.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA fully supports the measure as it promotes efforts to improve student academic achievement.

ASPIRA also supports the size of the authorization, but is concerned that a reduced annual appropriation and a requirement that grants be no less than \$20 million to any state, may lead to many states being left out of the program altogether or that no grants would be awarded.

S.1920 Getting Retention and Diplomas Up Among Today's Enrolled Students Act or the GRADUATES Act

- [Log in](#) [33] to post comments

Title: A bill to award competitive grants to eligible partnerships to enable the partnerships to implement innovative strategies at the secondary school level to improve student achievement and prepare at-risk students for postsecondary education and the workforce.

Sponsor: [Sen Reid, Harry](#) [34] [D-NV] (introduced 8/1/2007) Cosponsors (4)

Latest Major Action: 8/1/2007 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. **Highlights:** Funds may be used for activities such as: Creating expanded learning time opportunities, improving student transitions from middle school to high school and ensuring successful entry into high school, Improving student transitions from secondary school to postsecondary education and the workforce, increasing the autonomy and flexibility of secondary schools, and improving teaching and increasing academic rigor at the secondary school level.

Grant eligibility: Grants will be awarded, on a competitive basis, to eligible partnerships to enable the eligible partnerships to pay the Federal share of the costs of implementing innovative strategies to improve the achievement of at-risk students in secondary schools. Partnerships are defined as a state or local education agency partnering with at least one of the following: an institute of higher education, a nonprofit organization, a community-based organization, a business, or a school development organization.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports efforts to improve student academic achievement. This legislation could be integrated with the House *Success in Middle School Act*

H.R.2928 Graduation Promise Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [35] to post comments

Title: To provide grants to States to improve high schools and raise graduation rates while ensuring rigorous standards, to develop and implement effective school models for struggling students and dropouts, and to improve State policies to raise graduation rates, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Hinojosa, Ruben](#) [36] [D-TX-15] (introduced 6/28/2007) Cosponsors (31)

Related Bills: [S.1185](#) [37]

Latest Major Action: 9/11/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education. **Highlights:** Authorizes grants to states and, through them, subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) for differentiated high school improvement systems targeting support to schools with low student achievement and graduation rates after the school fails for two consecutive years to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) pursuant to state academic performance standards.

Grant eligibility: Grants can be awarded to (1) LEAs, nonprofit organizations, and institutions of higher education to develop and implement, or replicate, effective school models for struggling students and dropouts; and (2) states to adjust their policies to allow for educational innovations that improve high school graduation rates while ensuring rigorous education content standards and assessments, if such states implement differentiated high school improvement systems and statewide longitudinal student data systems.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA fully supports this legislation as it promotes efforts to improve student academic achievement.

School Financing

- [Log in](#) [38] to post comments

School Financing

H.R.2373 Student Bill of Rights

- [Log in](#) [39] to post comments

Title: To provide for adequate and equitable educational opportunities for students in State public school systems, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Fattah, Chaka](#) [40] [D-PA-2] (introduced 5/17/2007) Cosponsors (64)

Latest Major Action: 7/17/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Highlights: Make annual determinations as to whether each state's public school system provides all its students with educational resources to succeed academically and in life. Requires such education to enable students to: (1) acquire knowledge and skills necessary for responsible citizenship; (2) meet challenging academic achievement standards; and (3) compete and succeed in a global economy.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports data collection to determine if states are meeting their obligations with regards to providing adequate educational resources.

H.R.1623 Graduation for All Act

- [Log in](#) [41] to post comments

Title: To improve graduation rates by authorizing the Secretary of Education to make grants to improve adolescent literacy, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Hinojosa, Ruben](#) [42] [D-TX-15] (introduced 3/21/2007) Cosponsors (31)

Latest Major Action: 6/27/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education. **Highlights:** Establishes a program that will provide grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) and, through them, subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) to establish reading and writing programs to improve overall reading and writing performance among middle and high school students. Limits eligibility for subgrants to LEAs in a state that are among those that have the lowest graduation rates for public secondary school students.

Grant eligibility: Limits eligibility for subgrants to LEAs in a state that are among those that have the lowest graduation rates for public secondary school students. Includes among required uses of LEA subgrant funds: (1) hiring and inservice training of literacy coaches; (2) counseling for at-risk students; and (3) professional development for educators that addresses literacy needs of certain student groups.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports efforts to improve student academic achievement, especially at the middle and high school levels.

School Modernization / Construction

- [Log in](#) [43] to post comments

School Modernization / Construction

H.R.2470 America's Better Classrooms Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [44] to post comments

Title: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the incentives for the construction and renovation of public schools.

Sponsor: [Rep Rangel, Charles B.](#) [45] [D-NY-15] (introduced 5/24/2007) Cosponsors (174)

Related Bills: [S.912](#) [46]

Latest Major Action: 7/24/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Highlights: Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow a tax credit for investment in qualified public school modernization bonds, defined to include: (1) bonds for the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of a public school facility or for the acquisition of land for such facility (qualified school construction bonds); and (2) bonds to finance certain academic programs below the postsecondary level in empowerment zones or enterprise communities (qualified zone academy bonds). Establishes a national limitation on the issuance of such bonds and provides for the allocation of bond amounts among the states according to a specified formula. Terminates the authority for issuance of such bonds after 2009.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports school construction and modernization efforts.

H.R.3021 21st Century High-Performing Public School Facilities Act

- [Log in](#) [47] to post comments

Title: To direct the Secretary of Education to make grants and low-interest loans to local educational agencies for the construction, modernization, or repair of public kindergarten, elementary, and secondary educational facilities, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Chandler, Ben](#) [48] [D-KY-6] (introduced 7/12/2007) Cosponsors (5)

Latest Major Action: 9/11/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.**Highlights:** Makes grants in each fiscal year to local educational agencies (LEAs) in each state for the construction, modernization, or repair of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary schools to make them safe, healthy, high-performing, and technologically up-to-date. Gives priority to LEAs serving a high number or percentage of disadvantaged children and those whose public schools are in relatively poor condition.

Grant eligibility: Requires LEAs to contribute funds toward the costs of the program, but uses a sliding scale that factors in the relative poverty of an LEA's service area. Requires the Secretary to make low-interest loans to LEAs in each fiscal year for the same purposes and with the same priorities given in the distribution of the grants.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports school construction and modernization efforts. However, this legislation limits funding to LEAs. ASPIRA favors extending the program to charter schools.

S.1542 Investing for Tomorrow's Schools Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [49] to post comments

Title: A bill to establish State infrastructure banks for education, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Sen Clinton, Hillary Rodham](#) [50] [D-NY] (introduced 6/5/2007) Cosponsors (1)

Related Bills: [H.R.2573](#) [51]

Latest Major Action: 6/5/2007 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. **Highlights:** Enters into cooperative agreements with states under which: (1) they establish state and multistate infrastructure banks for education; and (2) the Secretary awards grants to states for initial capital to make loans through such banks to local educational agencies and public libraries for construction, reconstruction, or renovation of public elementary or secondary schools and public library facilities. Directs the Secretary to establish Healthy, High Performance School Guidelines for the construction and renovation of schools, educational facilities, and libraries relating to energy efficiency, renewable energy, water use, building materials, indoor environmental quality, and other appropriate matters.

Grant eligibility: Requires any local educational agency or public library using a loan under this Act to fund a new construction or renovation project to ensure that the project conforms, to the maximum extent practicable, to such Healthy, High Performance School Guidelines.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports school construction and modernization efforts. However, this legislation limits funding to LEAs and public libraries. ASPIRA favors extending the program to charter schools and other non-profit educational facilities.

Charter Schools

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Charter Schools

H.R.2904 Charter School Program Enhancement Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [53] to post comments

Title: To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to reauthorize the laws relating to public charter schools to improve academic achievement of all students.

Sponsor: [Rep Boustany, Charles W., Jr.](#) [54] [R-LA-7] (introduced 6/28/2007) Cosponsors (6)

Latest Major Action: 9/11/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education. **Highlights:** Extends grant priority to states that: (1) provide public charter schools with funding commensurate with that provided to other public schools; (2) focus on creating such schools in areas that have many schools designated as needing improvement; and (3) demonstrate that a high percentage of its charter school students are meeting, exceeding, or making sufficient progress toward state academic performance standards. Eliminates from grant consideration states that have certain restrictive charter school laws.

Grant availability: Establishes a competitive grant program for the dissemination of successful charter school programs.

ASPIRA Policy Position

This legislation extends existing authority. ASPIRA supports charter schools and efforts to strengthen them. ASPIRA supports expanding funding from the current authorization levels.

Access to Postsecondary Education and Financial Aid

- [Log in](#) [55] to post comments

Access to Postsecondary Education and Financial Aid

Public Law No. 110-84 Higher Education Access Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [56] to post comments

Title: To provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 601 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008.

House Reports: [110-210](#) [57]; Latest Conference Report: [110-317](#) [58] (in Congressional Record [H10168-10181](#) [59])

Highlights: Eliminates the "tuition sensitivity provision" which currently prohibits maximum Pell grant awards to students attending low-tuition institutions of higher education (IHEs) even if their income is low enough otherwise to qualify for the maximum award. Authorizes and appropriates \$5 million for FY2008 to cover the costs of eliminating tuition sensitivity. Extends from three to six years the limit on the deferral of Federal Family Education Loans (FFELs), Direct Loans (DLs), and Perkins loans (PLs) when borrowers are suffering economic hardship. Establishes a DL forgiveness program under which borrowers who, after October 1, 2007, have made 120 payments under income-based or standard repayment plans while employed in certain public service jobs may have 1/10th of their outstanding loan forgiven for each year during which they earned \$65,000 or less. Increases students' eligibility for financial aid under title IV of the HEA by increasing, by academic year 2012-2013, the income protection allowance. Establishes a Secondary School Graduation and College Enrollment program.

Grant eligibility: Requires the Secretary to award competitive five-year matching grants to consortia of nonprofit organizations and IHEs that have been effective in raising secondary school graduation rates and postsecondary enrollment rates, in order to operate programs of assistance to LEAs with secondary school graduation rates of 70% or less. College students studying to become teachers are eligible to receive grants of \$4,000/year for 4 years, given that they agree to teach at least 4 years after graduation at a high-need school.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports the elimination of the Pell Grant cap for students attending low-tuition colleges. It also supports extending the period after which students must start repaying Federally-supported student loans access and affordability of higher education. It allows students to enter the workforce and be in a better position to repay the loans. Moreover, with the extended grace period, more students will be willing to take federal loans, increasing college attendance of low-income students. ASPIRA also supports provisions to lower the payback burden (e.g., DL forgiveness) of students who already have loans.

ASPIRA supports the grant programs.

H.R.3512 College Textbook Affordability and Transparency Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [60] to post comments

Title: To ensure that college textbooks and supplemental materials are available and affordable.

Sponsor: [Rep Carson, Julia](#) [61] [D-IN-7] (introduced 9/10/2007) Cosponsors (4)

Latest Major Action: 9/10/2007 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor.

Highlights: The purpose is to have all involved parties work together to identify ways to decrease the cost of college textbooks and supplemental materials for students while protecting the academic freedom of faculty members to select high quality course materials for students.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports access and affordability to higher education.

S.1831 Private Student Loan Disclosure Enhancement Act

of 2007

- [Log in](#) [62] to post comments

Title: A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act, to improve disclosures for private student loans, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Sen Schumer, Charles E.](#) [63] [D-NY] (introduced 7/19/2007) Cosponsors (None)

Latest Major Action: 7/19/2007 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Highlights: Amends the Truth in Lending Act to subject private education loans to its consumer credit disclosure requirements. Subjects lenders to civil liability for violating such requirements. Requires civil actions to be brought within one year after the first monthly payment on the loan becomes due after the borrower leaves school, unless full repayment begins earlier. Requires private student loan providers, when making the required loan disclosures, to inform borrowers of their possible eligibility for federal educational loans. Requires the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System to develop and test a student borrower disclosure statement that encourages students to use federal educational loans and discloses their average interest rate and the fact that they are less costly than private education loans.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports efforts to address predatory lending and encourage transparency of the terms of educational loans.

S.1642 Higher Education Amendments of 2007

- [Log in](#) [64] to post comments

Title: A bill to extend the authorization of programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Sen Kennedy, Edward M.](#) [65] [D-MA] (introduced 6/18/2007) Cosponsors (10)

Latest Major Action: 7/26/2007 Held at the desk.**Highlights:** Provides that critical foreign languages are those contained on the list designated by the Secretary of Education in the Federal Register on August 5, 1985, but allows the Secretary to set language priorities according to the purposes of a specific program and national security, economic competitiveness, and educational needs. Requires title IV-eligible Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) that provide teacher training to set annual quantifiable goals for: (1) increasing the number of prospective teachers trained in teacher shortage areas; and (2) linking the training they provide more closely with the needs of schools and the instructional decisions new teachers face in the classroom. Directs such IHEs to publicly report on their performance toward such goals. Revises and reauthorizes HEA requirements for Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) under title V (Developing Institutions). Establishes the Mathematics and Science Scholars program, providing competitive matching grants to states for scholarships to first and second year college students who complete a rigorous secondary school curriculum in mathematics and science.

Grant availability: Authorizes the Secretary to award competitive five-year grants to partnerships of high-need local educational agencies (LEAs), high-need schools, and IHEs for use in carrying out a pre-baccalaureate teacher preparation program, a teaching residency program, or both. Allows partnerships to use grant funds to partner with television public broadcast stations to improve the quality of pre-baccalaureate teacher preparation programs.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports extending the authorization for the programs included in the measure, including increasing the teaching workforce, continued support of HSIs and scholarships for math and science education, among others.

Community / Parental Engagement

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Community / Parental Engagement

H.R.3853

- [Log in](#) [67] to post comments

Title: To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide for a National Resource Center for Positive Youth Development and School Success.

Sponsor: [Rep Ellison, Keith](#) [68] [MN-5] (introduced 10/16/2007) Cosponsors (None)

Latest Major Action: 10/16/2007 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor.

Highlights: Use available funds to establish centers that (1) provide resources, publications, and training to State and local educational agencies on the positive relationships, opportunities, and skills that students need to succeed in school and avoid risky behavior; (2) provide a free information service, using print, electronic media, and the Internet, for schools, principals, school officers, parent-teacher associations, and community groups, relating to infusing developmental assets, supports and strengths into existing school curriculum, programs, and services; and (3) conduct and publish research on the relationship between a strength-based approach to youth development and school success, including academic achievement and retention of the teaching force.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports positive youth development. However, the measure calls for use of existing funds.

ASPIRA supports the purpose of the measure but is concerned that either the centers will not be established for lack of funding or that funding will be taken from other valuable programs to create the centers.

After School Programs

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After School Programs

H.R.2857 Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act or the GIVE Act

- [Log in](#) [70] to post comments

Title: To reauthorize and reform the national service laws.

Sponsor: [Rep McCarthy, Carolyn](#) [71] [D-NY-4] (introduced 6/26/2007) Cosponsors (16)

Latest Major Action: 9/11/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Healthy Families and Communities. **Highlights:** Authorizes new Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) programs, providing grants for programs of national significance that provide poor and rural communities with: (1) financial literacy and planning; (2) before-school and after-school services; (3) community economic development initiatives; (4) assistance to veterans and their families; and (5) health and wellness services. Eliminates the VISTA Literacy Corps, University Year for VISTA, and Literacy Challenge Grant programs.

Grant eligibility: Grants for VISTA positions will be made to aid programs in developing and carrying-out financial literacy, financial planning, budgeting, savings, and reputable credit accessibility programs in low-income communities, including those programs which educate on financing home ownership and higher education; and in initiating and supporting before-school and after-school programs in low-income communities.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports services that address the needs of vulnerable children and families especially support for financial literacy. It should also support children and parent technology literacy.

ASPIRA is concerned about the elimination of the Literacy programs, as these can contribute to family literacy and student achievement.

Math and Science Initiatives

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Math and Science Initiatives

Public Law No: 110-69 America COMPETES Act

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Title: To invest in innovation through research and development, and to improve the competitiveness of the United

States. **Highlights:** (1) Encourages all elementary and middle schools to observe a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Day twice in every school year; (2) Initiates a program to encourage federal employees with scientific, technological, engineering, or mathematical skills to interact with school children on such Days; and (3) Promotes involvement in such Days by appropriate private sector and institution of higher education employees. Directs the Secretary to award grants to states for establishing or expanding public, statewide specialty schools for mathematics and science.

Grant eligibility: A grant awarded to a State for a specialty school for science and mathematics (i) shall not exceed \$2,000,000 for a fiscal year; and (ii) shall not be provided for more than 3 fiscal years.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports efforts to promote math and science education. However, the establishment of special math and science schools will serve higher income students (as the current math and science-dedicated schools do) and there is no provision that these schools will serve low-income students. Funding would be better targeted at improving math and science education in low-income area schools.

Bilingual / Foreign Language Education

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Bilingual / Foreign Language Education

H.R.2111 Foreign Language Education Partnership Program Act

- [Log in](#) [75] to post comments

Title: To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a partnership program in foreign languages.

Sponsor: [Rep Holt, Rush D.](#) [76] [D-NJ-12] (introduced 5/2/2007) Cosponsors (30)

Latest Major Action: 7/17/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Highlights: Amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to replace the program providing incentive payments to public elementary schools for foreign language instruction with a partnership program in foreign languages that provides matching incentive payments to partnerships composed of state or local educational agencies and institutions of higher education. Requires each model program to have a dimension allowing the student to gain an understanding of the historic, geographic, cultural, economic, and other contextual factors of countries whose people speak the language studied. Conditions a partnership's continued funding, for an initial four-year period and two additional five-year periods, on its demonstrating its program effectiveness based on nationally recognized standardized foreign language assessments.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports efforts to promote second language acquisition and cultural understanding. However, ASPIRA is concerned about the unintended consequences of this amendment, as it could result in an overall reduction of funding for foreign language acquisition.

H.R.2861 Language Education for Success Act of 2007

- [Log in](#) [77] to post comments

Title: To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a partnership program in foreign languages.

Sponsor: [Rep Holt, Rush D.](#) [76] [D-NJ-12] (introduced 5/2/2007) Cosponsors (30)

Latest Major Action: 7/17/2007 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Highlights: Amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to replace the program providing incentive payments to public elementary schools for foreign language instruction with a partnership program in foreign languages that provides matching incentive payments to partnerships composed of state or local educational agencies and institutions of higher education. Requires each model program to have a dimension allowing the student to gain an understanding of the historic, geographic, cultural, economic, and other contextual factors of countries whose people speak the language studied. Conditions a partnership's continued funding, for an initial four-year period and two additional five-year periods, on its demonstrating its program effectiveness based on nationally recognized standardized foreign language assessments.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports loan forgiveness for teachers that serve limited English proficient students. It also support increased research on the educational attainment of English learners.

H.R.3842 Providing Resources to Improve Dual Language Education Act of 2007 or the PRIDE Act

- [Log in](#) [78] to post comments

Title: To establish dual-language education programs in low-income communities.

Sponsor: [Rep Solis, Hilda L.](#) [79] [CA-32] (introduced 10/16/2007) Cosponsors (3)

Latest Major Action: 10/16/2007 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor.

Highlights: Enhance the biliteracy, bilingualism, and multicultural skills for children in impoverished communities, including limited-English-proficient and minority children, through the use and longitudinal evaluation of dual language programs beginning in preschool through the fifth grade.

ASPIRA Policy Position

ASPIRA supports efforts to promote second language acquisition and cultural understanding.

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