

**Don't Let Congress Punish Our Students, Teachers and Schools  
Vote No on Miller/Pelosi NCLB Reauthorization Bill**

**FACT SHEET**

September 8, 2007

**The No Child Left Behind Act is Not Working. It is Hurting our Students, Teachers and Schools.**

- The No Child Left Behind Act is hurting our students, teachers and schools. Its failed one-size-fits-all approach to education ignores the individual needs of our students. Parents and teachers know all children do not learn in the same way or at the same pace.
- NCLB grades student and school success based on a snapshot of mandated, standardized tests given on a single day. The focus on testing forces teachers to teach to the test and has decimated programs like art, music, social studies and physical education.
- NCLB sets up schools to fail. This year NCLB labeled one out of every four California public schools as failing. Instead of punishing schools, we need a system that provides assistance and resources to help all students and schools succeed.
- NCLB has not improved student learning. According to the Harvard Civil Rights Project NCLB did not have a significant impact on improving reading and math achievement scores and it has not helped narrow achievement gaps. The research shows the law has actually shortchanged schools that serve predominantly disadvantaged, minority students with an over reliance on sanctions rather than assistance.
- The President and Congress have broken their promise to fully fund the law, making NCLB a federally mandated burden on local school districts. The shortfall in promised federal funding now exceeds \$56 billion.

**The NCLB reauthorization proposal by Representative George Miller and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi does nothing to improve the current law and actually makes it worse.**

- California teachers are calling on Congress to vote NO on the NCLB reauthorization proposal by Representative George Miller and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. It does nothing to improve the law or student learning and will actually make it harder for students, teachers and public schools.

- The Miller/Pelosi reauthorization bill continues to measure student and school success based on standardized test scores and fails to include multiple measures like attendance rates, graduation rates, a rigorous curriculum, and the number of students participating in honors or advanced placement courses.
- The Miller/Pelosi reauthorization bill creates four new levels of sanctions for schools that are struggling. It punishes lower-performing schools rather than giving students and teachers the assistance and proven tools they need to improve student learning.

**The Miller/Pelosi NCLB reauthorization bill will make it harder to attract and retain quality teachers in California classrooms.**

- It creates a new federal mandate to pay and evaluate teachers based on student test scores. Test scores don't fairly measure student achievement and cannot accurately evaluate and pay teachers.
- California needs 100,000 new teachers in the next 10 years. This proposal will make it harder to get the quality teachers we so desperately need in our classrooms.
- Paying teachers based on student test scores will result in more teaching to the test and will end up driving teachers away from lower-performing schools – the very schools that need help the most.
- Research shows that merit pay schemes tied to student test scores have not improved student achievement and have been abandoned in many states where they were tried, because they were not working.

**The Miller/Pelosi NCLB reauthorization bill imposes new federal mandates that undermine local control and employee rights.**

- The Miller/Pelosi reauthorization plan undermines local control and erodes employee rights. It imposes hundreds of federal government mandates on California schools rather than letting local teachers, parents and school districts decide what's best for their students.
- The reauthorization proposal undermines teachers' rights to bargain issues such as pay, working conditions and other programs that directly impact local students and schools.
- California teachers work for local school districts not the federal government. This proposal's attempt to mandate a particular evaluation or compensation process is an unprecedented federal infringement on teacher rights. It's offensive and disrespectful to educators.

**Rather than punishing students and teachers, NCLB should provide proven reforms that improve student learning**

- Rather than wasting billions of dollars on more bureaucracy, paperwork and testing, NCLB should focus on reforms that work. Congress should restore and enhance the federal class size reduction program, with priority given to our schools of greatest need.
- California has some of the largest class sizes in the country and ranks 49th in the number of teachers per student. Research shows that smaller class sizes improve student learning and significantly close the achievement gap.
- NCLB should provide resources for quality teacher training, mentors for new teachers and programs that enhance parental and family involvement in our schools.