

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1369

To provide for truancy prevention and reduction, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 4, 1997

Mr. DODD introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to
the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

A BILL

To provide for truancy prevention and reduction, and for
other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Prevention of Truancy
5 Act of 1997”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) in 1994, courts in the United States for-
9 mally processed 36,400 truancy cases, representing
10 a 35 percent increase since 1990, and a 67 percent

1 increase since 1985, in the formal processing of tru-
2 ancy cases;

3 (2) in 1993, among individuals aged 16 through
4 24, approximately 3,400,000,000 (11 percent of all
5 individuals in this age group) had not completed
6 high school and were not enrolled in school;

7 (3) the economic and social costs of providing
8 for the increasing population of youth who are at
9 risk of leaving or who have left the educational
10 mainstream are an enormous drain on the resources
11 of Federal, State, and local governments and the
12 private sector;

13 (4) truancy is the first indicator that a young
14 person is giving up and losing his or her way;

15 (5) students who become truant and eventually
16 drop out of school put themselves at a long-term dis-
17 advantage in becoming productive citizens;

18 (6) high school drop-outs are two and one-half
19 times more likely to be on welfare than high school
20 graduates;

21 (7) high school drop-outs are almost twice as
22 likely to be unemployed as high school graduates;

23 (8) in 1993, 17 percent of youth under age 18
24 who entered adult prisons had not completed grade
25 school, one-fourth of such youth had completed 10th

1 grade, and 2 percent of such youth had a high
2 school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

3 (9) truancy contributes to increased use of the
4 foster care and court systems;

5 (10) truancy is a gateway to crime, and high
6 rates of truancy are linked to high daytime burglary
7 rates and high vandalism rates;

8 (11) communities that have instituted truancy
9 prevention programs have seen daytime burglary
10 rates decline by as much as 75 percent; and

11 (12) truancy prevention and reduction pro-
12 grams result in significant increases in school at-
13 tendance.

14 **SEC. 3. GOALS.**

15 The goals of this Act are to prevent and reduce tru-
16 ancy.

17 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this Act:

19 (1) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL; SECONDARY
20 SCHOOL.—The terms “elementary school” and “sec-
21 ondary school” have the meanings given the terms
22 in section 14101 of the Elementary and Secondary
23 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 8801).

1 (2) PARENT.—The term “parent” means the
 2 biological parent, adoptive parent, or legal guardian,
 3 of a child.

4 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 5 the Secretary of Education.

6 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUANCY PREVENTION AND**
 7 **CRIME CONTROL DEMONSTRATION**
 8 **PROJECTS.**

9 (a) DEMONSTRATIONS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary
 10 shall make grants to partnerships consisting of an elemen-
 11 tary school or secondary school, a local law enforcement
 12 agency, and a social service and youth serving organiza-
 13 tion, for the purpose of developing, implementing, or oper-
 14 ating projects for the prevention or reduction of truancy.

15 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—Grant funds under this section
 16 may be used for programs that prevent or reduce truancy,
 17 such as programs that use police officers or patrol officers
 18 to pick up truant students, return the students to school,
 19 or take the students to centers for assessment.

20 (c) APPLICATION AND SELECTION.—Each partner-
 21 ship desiring a grant under this section shall submit an
 22 application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner,
 23 and accompanied by such information as the Secretary
 24 may require. Each such application shall—

1 (1) contain a description of the proposed tru-
2 ancy prevention or reduction project to be estab-
3 lished or improved with funds provided under this
4 Act;

5 (2) specify the methods to be used to involve
6 parents in truancy prevention or reduction activities;

7 (3) specify the types of sanctions that students
8 will face for engaging in truant behavior;

9 (4) specify the incentives that will be used for
10 parental responsibility;

11 (5) specify the types of initiatives, if any, that
12 schools will develop to combat the underlying causes
13 of truancy; and

14 (6) specify the linkages that will be made with
15 local law enforcement agencies.

16 (d) **SELECTION CRITERIA.**—The Secretary shall give
17 priority in awarding grants under this Act to partner-
18 ships—

19 (1) serving areas with concentrations of pov-
20 erty, including urban and rural areas; and

21 (2) that meet any other criteria that the Sec-
22 retary determines will contribute to the achievement
23 of the goals of this Act.

24 **SEC. 6. EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS.**

25 (a) **PROJECT EVALUATIONS.**—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each partnership receiving a
2 grant under this section shall—

3 (A) provide for the evaluation of the
4 project assisted under this Act, which evalua-
5 tion shall meet such conditions and standards
6 as the Secretary may require; and

7 (B) submit to the Secretary reports, at
8 such times, in such formats, and containing
9 such information, as the Secretary may require.

10 (2) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—A report sub-
11 mitted under subparagraph (1)(B) shall include in-
12 formation on and analysis of the effect of the project
13 with respect to—

14 (A) prevention of or reduction in truancy;

15 (B) increased school attendance; and

16 (C) reduction in juvenile crime.

17 (b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary, on the
18 basis of the reports received under subsection (a), shall
19 submit interim reports, and, not later than March 1, 2002,
20 submit a final report, to Congress. Each report submitted
21 under this subsection shall contain an assessment of the
22 effectiveness of the projects assisted under this Act, and
23 any recommendations for legislative action that the Sec-
24 retary considers appropriate.

1 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
3 priated to carry out this Act—

4 (1) \$80,000,000 for fiscal year 1998; and

5 (2) such sums as may be necessary for each of
6 the fiscal years 1999, 2000, and 2001.

7 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Funds appropriated under sub-
8 section (a) shall remain available until expended.

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