

EDUCATION SCIENCES REFORM ACT OF 2002

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3801, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3801) to provide for improvement of Federal education research, statistics, evaluation, information, and dissemination, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I welcome this bipartisan agreement on the reauthorization of the Office of Education Research. The new Institute of Education Sciences created by this legislation will improve the capacity of the Department to conduct high quality research to improve educational opportunities for all students.

We know that research can make a difference in teaching and learning by providing high quality technical assistance and professional development, reliable data, and wide dissemination of research and best practices.

We all agree that education research has to be high quality. It also needs to be directly related to the needs of the professionals in the field. Schools, teachers, principals and child care providers all must have access to the best practices in education if our schools are to be the best they can be.

States, schools and teachers have to face the challenge of preparing students for assessments and dealing with schools that fail to make adequate progress. Regional technical assistance providers can help them meet this challenge. Our bill reauthorizes the regional education laboratories, and provides a smooth transition from the current system of technical assistance providers to a new, streamlined system of comprehensive centers. We know that our teachers need this support and we intend to provide it.

The Federal Government has a distinguished history of investment in education research. What began many years ago as data collection has evolved into a current approach that collects, analyzes and disseminates important information. It enables researchers to bring their analyses to the people who need this information and can use it best. Our bill also maintains the autonomy of the National Center on Statistics, and makes sure that the National Assessment of Education Progress stays out of the political arena.

Our goals are to raise the quality of research conducted at the new Institute, to link its research with other research, and to make it available to the teachers who use it.

We want to be able to look to this Institute when we have education ques-

tions in the same way that we look to the NIH when we have medical questions. This bill provides a sound foundation to do so.

I commend the Committee staff who worked long and hard and effectively on this bill: Alex Nock, Denise Forte, Doug Mesecar, Bob Sweet and Sally Lovejoy of the House Committee; Lloyd Horwich with Senator DODD, Elyse Wasch and Kathleen Fitzgerald with Senator REED, Bethany Little with Senator MURRAY, Carmel Martin with Senator BINGAMAN, Rebecca Litt with Senator MIKULSKI, Eric Fatemi with Senator HARKIN, David Sewell with Senator EDWARDS, Jill Morningstar with Senator WELLSTONE, Katherine Brown with Senator CLINTON and Sherry Kaiman with Senator JEFFORDS, Tracy Locklin with Senator GREGG, Amanda Farris with Senator ENZI, Kristin Bannerman with Senator DEWINE, Jennifer Swenson with Senator ROBERTS, Andrea Becker with Senator FRIST and Jane Oates and Emma Vadehra of my own staff. I thank Amy Gaynor of Legislative Counsel and the floor staff for working with us to complete the process.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, first let me say that I believe that this Substitute Amendment to H.R. 3801, The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, represents a significant step toward achieving our common goal of improving the quality of education research. I thank Assistant Secretary Whitehurst and his staff for the assistance they provided in crafting this legislation. I am especially gratified to see this bill come together in the same spirit of bipartisanship in which we crafted the No Child Left Behind Act.

Though significant Federal involvement in education research dates back to the 1950's, we are still without a strong body of high quality education research to guide education policymaking. Yet the need for sound, rigorous education research that is free of political bias and useful to educators has never been more important. With passage of the bipartisan No Child Left Behind Act, we have made it our mission as a Nation to make sure every student is well-educated. By renewing our efforts to master the science of how children learn best, this bill will help tremendously in achieving that mission.

Specifically, the bill:

No. 1, reconstitutes the Office of Education Research and Improvement as the "Institute of Education Sciences" to provide a more rational, streamlined infrastructure for the Department of Education's research, development, statistics, evaluation, and dissemination functions;

No. 2, establishes more rigorous research standards, which all Institute-funded education research will have to meet. Education fads that masquerade as science will no longer be acceptable;

No. 3, establishes Research and Development Centers to cover such important topics as standards, assess-

ment and accountability, improving low achieving schools, innovation in education reform, rural education, teacher quality, and postsecondary education;

No. 4, contributes to the creation of a "culture of science" within the new Institute by giving the Director the hiring flexibility necessary to attract and retain the best researchers, evaluators, and statisticians to the Institute;

No. 5, makes technical assistance to schools, school districts, and states more efficient and user-friendly, particularly the assistance needed in order to effectively implement the No Child Left Behind Act. The current patchwork of regional technical assistance entities will be replaced by a single set of technical assistance providers;

No. 6, increases the independence of the research and evaluation functions of the Department, while preserving the independence and quality of the current National Center for Education Statistics;

No. 7, further insulates the National Assessment of Educational Progress from political interference by giving the independent National Assessment Governing Board the authority to release NAEP results to the public; and

No. 8, requires that grants and contracts with regional education laboratories, national research and development centers, and technical assistance providers are awarded on the basis of open competition.

It is my hope that the significant reforms made by this legislation will mark the beginning of a new era in the field of education research—an era in which policymaking will be based on sound science, to the benefit of our Nation's students.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I support the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002.

This legislation reauthorizes and renames the current Office of Educational Research and Improvement at the Department of Education, now to be called the Institute of Education Sciences. The bill will increase the quality of educational research and statistics, improve dissemination, technical assistance, educational product development, evaluation, and other research efforts, and minimize the effect of politics on education research.

As States begin to implement the No Child Left Behind Act, the need for a responsive, relevant, high quality, and rigorous education knowledge enterprise is greater than ever.

Mr. President, I am particularly pleased about the bill's provisions to retain and strengthen the regional educational laboratories. The regional educational laboratories, like the Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University, conduct applied research, develop educational products and materials, provide technical assistance, and disseminate information in order to improve teaching, increase student achievement, and promote effective

school reform. The Education Sciences Reform Act enhances the regional educational laboratories work to put research into practice and focuses their efforts on helping states and districts meet their specific educational needs.

I thank Chairman KENNEDY, Senator GREGG, Senator ENZI, and members of the House Education and the Workforce Committee for working closely with me on many aspects of this legislation. This is important legislation, and I am pleased to support it.

Mr. DASCHLE. I understand Senators KENNEDY, GREGG, and others have a substitute amendment at the desk, and I ask the amendment be considered and agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that the bill, as amended, be read three times, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements related thereto be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4885) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (H.R. 3801), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY,
OCTOBER 16, 2002

Mr. DASCHLE. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 10:40 a.m., Wednesday, October 16; that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and there be a period of morning business until 11:40 a.m., with the Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the first half under the control of the Republican leader or his designee, and the second half of the time under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee; that at 11:40 a.m. the Senate

resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 3295, the Election Reform Act, under the previous order; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 to 2:15 p.m. for the weekly party conferences.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. DASCHLE. The next rollcall vote will occur on Wednesday, October 16, at 12 noon, on adoption of the election reform conference report.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:40 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. DASCHLE. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:57 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, October 16, 2002, at 10:40 a.m.