

Rep. Sak offered the following concurrent resolution:

House Concurrent Resolution No. 70.

A concurrent resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to enact legislation to reform the No Child Left Behind Act.

Whereas, The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is an ambitious effort by the federal government to ensure that all states improve K-12 education opportunities. While standards, accountability, and benchmarks are key features of this landmark 2002 legislation, the goal of making sure all of our children receive a quality education must not be forgotten. The current reauthorization process for NCLB is an opportunity to reform the act to ensure that no child is left behind in this federal, state, and school partnership; and

Whereas, NCLB needs to be amended in a number of areas to fulfill its admirable goal. First, while schools are being identified for failing to meet standards, Congress has not met its promises for funding levels to allow schools to correct identified inadequacies. Further, a whole range of initiatives that expand early education, before- and after-school programs, summer school options, and family support, would enhance the ability of our schools to educate all of our children to their full potential; and

Whereas, Schools also need flexibility in a whole range of areas. Special education implementation, teacher subject area competency, school benchmarks, and student cohort definitions must not be imposed from Washington, D.C. Local educators and state legislatures must be allowed to refine these aspects of NCLB to reflect local conditions and needs. Flexibility and more sophisticated measurements will keep the focus on educating children and not meeting unrealistic and rigid standards; and

Whereas, The entire sanctions concept must be revised. It may be comforting to think that NCLB sanctions "schools" when they do not meet NCLB-established standards, but in reality we sanction children in those schools by withholding or effectively diverting resources from those schools. The first response must be to target additional resources to correct recognized deficiencies; and

Whereas, To support effective intervention in failing schools, develop proper standards that promote education of all children, and ensure relevant definitions and procedures that reflect real conditions, NCLB must be amended to ensure that the act's assumptions and standards are based on sound research in student achievement and effective teaching; and

Whereas, The reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act is an opportunity to refine the admirable goals of the act based on five years of experience in implementing the 2002 initiative. We have much to do before "no child left behind" is more than just a goal; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That we memorialize the United States Congress to enact legislation to reform the No Child Left Behind Act; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.