

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE BOB MILLER

House Joint Resolution 39:

A Resolution urging the Governor to direct the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to prepare and submit a request for flexibility under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to obtain a waiver of select requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and to direct the commissioner of education and early development to provide a comprehensive improvement plan that will guarantee that students in the state will be adequately prepared for academic and vocational success.

Sponsor Statement

The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is largely inadequate and often results in unnecessary difficulties for Alaskan educators because it does not account for the geographic conditions, cultural considerations or economic challenges unique to Alaska. Last year, the federal government offered states a process to opt-out of the NCLB requirements if a state developed its own standards and system to ensure school accountability. This resolution urges the governor to take back control of our schools by developing Alaska-appropriate standards and accountability measures in order to opt out of NCLB.

Developing our own standards and accountability measures to get a waiver from NCLB will provide Alaska educators the tools they need to improve education performance without reducing the state's ability to secure federal funding. It will also allow Alaska to determine **local solutions** based on student needs unique to rural areas. So far, 10 states have applied and been granted waivers and an additional 28 states have filed intent to submit a request for the second round.

Recently, the U.S. Secretary of Education stated that more than four out of five schools will fail to meet the NCLB mandated benchmark standards by 2014.

We understand that the commissioner is already taking steps to potentially develop core standards that could meet the requirements to earn a waiver from NCLB.

I urge you to join me in supporting House Joint Resolution 39