

September 9, 2008

The Honorable George Miller
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Buck McKeon
2351 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Miller and McKeon:

The undersigned education groups, representing millions of Americans, would like to express our support for the No Child Left Inside Act (H.R. 3036). We thank you for backing this important legislation to help states enhance the quality of their environmental education programs.

No Child Left Behind has produced many unintended consequences for students, parents and educators across the country. One of the most detrimental has been a narrowing of the curriculum, as schools are forced to spend more and more learning time preparing for high-stakes testing. This trend is most exaggerated in the schools of our poorest communities. At the same time, our country is facing a host of complicated environmental challenges, which are well documented in the media, which will require our citizenry to be more educated about our personal and civic choices than ever before. The No Child Left Inside Act is an important answer to both of these challenges.

Our groups strongly support providing rich, challenging, authentic environmental education experiences to *all* children. To reach this goal, teachers and schools systems must be provided with greater authority, flexibility, and support to incorporate environmental education into core subject areas.

It is important to note that the Act does not create any new mandates or requirements for states. To be eligible for new environmental education funding, states would be required to develop plans to ensure that all of their students are environmentally literate.

We strongly believe that educators must be given the training, the tools, and the time to incorporate environmental education meaningfully. Additionally, states in partnership with local school systems and other stakeholders must develop plans to ensure that all children are provided the learning experiences they need to become environmentally literate. The NCLI Act will help allow that to happen.

Again, we thank you for your leadership and look forward to continuing to work with you on these very important issues.

Sincerely,

American Association of University Women
American Federation of Teachers
American School Counselor Association
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Education Association
National Middle School Association
National Science Teachers Association

Cc: Members, House of Representatives