

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2355

To prevent truancy and daytime juvenile crime.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 24, 1998

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

A BILL

To prevent truancy and daytime juvenile crime.

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 “Truancy Prevention
5 and Juvenile Crime Reduction Act of 1998”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Truancy is the first sign of trouble—the
9 first indicator that a young person is giving up and
10 losing his or her way.

11 (2) Many students who become truant eventu-
12 ally drop out of school, and high school drop outs

1 are two and a half times more likely to be on welfare
2 than high school graduates; twice as likely to be un-
3 employed, or if employed, earn lower salaries.

4 (3) Truancy is the top-ranking characteristic of
5 criminals—more common than such factors as com-
6 ing from single-parent families and being abused as
7 children.

8 (4) High rates of truancy are linked to high
9 daytime burglary rates and high vandalism.

10 (5) As much as 44 percent of violent juvenile
11 crime takes place during school hours.

12 (6) As many as 75 percent of children ages 13–
13 16 who are arrested and prosecuted for crimes are
14 truants.

15 (7) Some cities report as many as 70 percent
16 of daily student absences are unexcused, and the
17 total number of absences in a single city can reach
18 4,000 per day.

19 (8) Society pays a significant social and eco-
20 nomic cost due to truancy: only 34 percent of in-
21 mates have completed high school education; 17 per-
22 cent of youth under age 18 entering adult prisons
23 have not completed grade school (8th grade or less),
24 25 percent completed 10th grade, and 2 percent
25 completed high school.

1 (9) Truants and later high school drop outs
2 cost the Nation \$240 billion in lost earnings and
3 foregone taxes over their lifetimes, and the cost of
4 crime control is staggering.

5 (10) In many instances, parents are unaware a
6 child is truant.

7 (11) Effective truancy prevention, early inter-
8 vention, and accountability programs can improve
9 school attendance and reduce daytime crime rates.

10 (12) There is a lack of targeted funding for ef-
11 fective truancy prevention programs in current law.

12 **SEC. 3. GRANTS.**

13 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 (1) ELIGIBLE PARTNERSHIP.—The term “eligi-
15 ble partnership” means a partnership between 1 or
16 more qualified units of local government and 1 or
17 more local educational agencies.

18 (2) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term
19 “local educational agency” has the meaning given
20 the term in section 14101 of the Elementary and
21 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 8801).

22 (3) QUALIFIED UNIT OF LOCAL GOVERN-
23 MENT.—The term “qualified unit of local govern-
24 ment” means a unit of local government that has in
25 effect, as of the date on which the eligible partner-

1 ship submits an application for a grant under this
2 section, a statute or regulation that meets the re-
3 quirements of paragraphs (12), (13), (14), and (15)
4 of section 223(a) of the Juvenile Justice and Delin-
5 quency and Prevention Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C.
6 5633(a)).

7 (4) UNIT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term
8 “unit of local government” means any city, county,
9 township, town, borough, parish, village, or other
10 general purpose political subdivision of a State, or
11 any Indian tribe.

12 (b) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Attorney General, in
13 consultation with the Secretary of Education, shall make
14 grants in accordance with this section on a competitive
15 basis to eligible partnerships to reduce truancy and the
16 incidence of daytime juvenile crime.

17 (c) MAXIMUM AMOUNT; ALLOCATION; RENEWAL.—

18 (1) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The total amount
19 awarded to an eligible partnership under this section
20 in any fiscal year shall not exceed \$100,000.

21 (2) ALLOCATION.—Not less than 25 percent of
22 each grant awarded to an eligible partnership under
23 this section shall be allocated for use by the local
24 educational agency or agencies participating in the
25 partnership.

1 (3) RENEWAL.—A grant awarded under this
2 section for a fiscal year may be renewed for an addi-
3 tional period of not more than 2 fiscal years.

4 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Grant amounts made avail-
6 able under this section may be used by an eligible
7 partnership to comprehensively address truancy
8 through the use of—

9 (A) parental involvement in prevention ac-
10 tivities, including meaningful incentives for pa-
11 rental responsibility;

12 (B) sanctions, including community service
13 and drivers' license suspension for students who
14 are habitually truant;

15 (C) parental accountability, including fines,
16 teacher-aid duty, community service;

17 (D) in-school truancy prevention programs,
18 including alternative education and in-school
19 suspension;

20 (E) involvement of the local law enforce-
21 ment, social services, judicial, business, and re-
22 ligious communities, and nonprofit organiza-
23 tions;

1 (F) technology, including automated tele-
2 phone notice to parents and computerized at-
3 tendance system; or

4 (G) elimination of 40-day count and other
5 unintended incentives to allow students to be
6 truant after a certain time of school year.

7 (2) MODEL PROGRAMS.—In carrying out this
8 section, the Attorney General may give priority to
9 funding programs that attempt to replicate 1 or
10 more of the following model programs:

11 (A) The Truancy Intervention Project of
12 the Fulton County, Georgia, Juvenile Court.

13 (B) The TABS (Truancy Abatement and
14 Burglary Suppression) program of Milwaukee,
15 Wisconsin.

16 (C) The Roswell Daytime Curfew Program
17 of Roswell, New Mexico.

18 (D) The Stop, Cite and Return Program of
19 Rohnert Park, California.

20 (E) The Stay in School Program of New
21 Haven, Connecticut.

22 (F) The Atlantic County Project Helping
23 Hand of Atlantic County, New Jersey.

1 (G) The THRIVE (Truancy Habits Re-
2 duced Increasing Valuable Education) initiative
3 of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

4 (H) The Norfolk, Virginia project using
5 computer software and data collection.

6 (I) The Community Service Early Inter-
7 vention Program of Marion, Ohio.

8 (J) The Truancy Reduction Program of
9 Bakersfield, California.

10 (K) The Grade Court program of Farm-
11 ington, New Mexico.

12 (L) Any other model program that the At-
13 torney General determines to be appropriate.

14 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
15 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
16 \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1999, 2000, and
17 2001.

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