

# CRS Report for Congress

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## **ESEA Reauthorization Proposals: Comparison of Major Features of the House and Senate Versions of H.R. 1**

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Coordinated by  
Wayne Riddle  
Specialist in Education Finance  
Domestic Social Policy Division

# **ESEA Reauthorization Proposals: Comparison of Major Features of the House and Senate Versions of H.R. 1**

## **Summary**

The authorizations of appropriations for most programs of federal aid to elementary and secondary (grades K-12) education, under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), expired at the end of FY2000. While the 106th Congress extensively considered several bills which would have reauthorized and amended most of these programs, only legislation extending the Impact Aid (ESEA Title VIII) and Even Start Family Literacy (ESEA Title I, Part B) programs was enacted. Selected other programs, such as the Class Size Reduction program, have been initiated and continued solely through annual appropriations legislation.

The 107th Congress is considering proposals to amend and extend the ESEA.

On June 14, 2001, the Senate passed its version of H.R. 1, the "Better Education for Students and Teachers (BEST) Act," while the House passed its version of H.R. 1, the "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001," on May 23. Conference committee consideration of the differing versions of H.R. 1 is expected to begin shortly.

These two versions of H.R. 1 have several common characteristics. Both of them would: expand upon the existing pupil outcome accountability requirements of the ESEA Title I program for the education of disadvantaged pupils; require participating states to assess pupil performance in each of grades 3-8 (contingent on appropriation of minimum amounts for state assessment grants under the Senate bill), and to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress ( or in the case of the House bill, an alternative assessment); provide for public school choice and supplemental services options for pupils attending unsuccessful schools; authorize expanded programs intended to enhance teacher quality; require the publication of "report cards" on the performance of schools, local educational agencies (LEAs), and states; and authorize bonuses for especially successful schools, LEAs, and/or states, as well as sanctions for states which fail to meet their performance objectives. In contrast, only the House passed version of H.R. 1 would require states to develop plans providing that all public school teachers will be "fully qualified" by December 2005; significantly increase required qualifications for teacher aides hired with Title I funds; authorize all states and LEAs to transfer funds among selected programs, and authorize a broader program consolidation authority for up to 100 LEAs. Only the Senate-passed version of H.R. 1 would require states to have a plan to ensure that all core subject teachers in schools in which 50% or more of the students are low-income be highly qualified; require states to adopt assessments in science and standards in history; authorize up to seven states and 25 LEAs to eliminate a wide range of program requirements in return for increased accountability in terms of pupil outcomes; and both authorize and appropriate increasing amounts for the non-ESEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, reaching an estimated "full funding" level by FY2011.