

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1015

To reauthorize the National Writing Project.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 28, 2007

Mr. COCHRAN (for himself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To reauthorize the National Writing Project.

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 “National Writing
5 Project Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The United States is facing a continuing
9 crisis in writing in schools and in the workplace.

10 (2) The writing problem has been magnified by
11 the rapidly changing student population, the growing

1 number of English language learners, the increasing
2 numbers of adolescents who are low-achieving writ-
3 ers, the shortage of adequately trained teachers, and
4 the specialized knowledge required of teachers to
5 teach students with special needs who are now part
6 of mainstream classrooms.

7 (3) Nationwide reports show that nearly one-
8 third of high school graduates are not ready for col-
9 lege-level English composition courses.

10 (4) Writing is a threshold skill for both employ-
11 ment and promotion. Deficiencies in writing skills
12 have resulted in annual private sector costs for pro-
13 viding writing training that are as high as
14 \$3,100,000,000.

15 (5) Writing is a central feature in State and
16 school district education standards in all disciplines.

17 (6) Since 1973, the only national program to
18 address the writing problem in the Nation's schools
19 has been the National Writing Project, a network of
20 collaborative university-school programs.

21 (7) Evaluations of the National Writing Project
22 document significant gains in student performance
23 in writing and effective classroom practices.

24 (8) The National Writing Project has become a
25 model for programs to improve teaching in such

1 other fields as mathematics, science, history, civics
2 and government, geography, reading and literature,
3 technology, performing arts, and foreign languages.

4 (9) Each year, more than 135,000 teachers di-
5 rectly benefit from National Writing Project pro-
6 grams in nearly 200 sites located in all 50 States,
7 the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of
8 Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.

9 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF THE NATIONAL WRITING**
10 **PROJECT.**

11 Subpart 2 of part C of title II of the Elementary and
12 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6701 et
13 seq.) is amended to read as follows:

14 **“Subpart 2—National Writing Project**

15 **“SEC. 2331. PURPOSES.**

16 “The purposes of this subpart are—

17 “(1) to support and promote the expansion of
18 the National Writing Project network of sites so
19 that teachers in every region of the United States
20 will have access to a National Writing Project pro-
21 gram;

22 “(2) to ensure the consistent high quality of the
23 sites through ongoing review, evaluation, and tech-
24 nical assistance;

1 “(3) to support and promote the establishment
2 of programs to disseminate effective practices and
3 research findings about the teaching of writing; and

4 “(4) to coordinate activities assisted under this
5 subpart with activities assisted under this Act.

6 **“SEC. 2332. NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT.**

7 “(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary is authorized
8 to award a grant to the National Writing Project, a non-
9 profit educational organization that has as its primary
10 purpose the improvement of the quality of student writing
11 and learning (hereafter in this section referred to as the
12 ‘grantee’) to improve the teaching of writing and the use
13 of writing as a part of the learning process in our Nation’s
14 classrooms.

15 “(b) REQUIREMENTS OF GRANT.—The grant shall
16 provide that—

17 “(1) the grantee will enter into contracts with
18 institutions of higher education or other nonprofit
19 educational providers (hereafter in this section re-
20 ferred to as ‘contractors’) under which the contrac-
21 tors will agree to establish, operate, and provide the
22 non-Federal share of the cost of teacher training
23 programs in effective approaches and processes for
24 the teaching of writing;

1 “(2) funds made available by the Secretary to
2 the grantee pursuant to any contract entered into
3 under this section will be used to pay the Federal
4 share of the cost of establishing and operating teach-
5 er training programs as provided in paragraph (1);
6 and

7 “(3) the grantee will meet such other conditions
8 and standards as the Secretary determines to be
9 necessary to assure compliance with the provisions
10 of this section and will provide such technical assist-
11 ance as may be necessary to carry out the provisions
12 of this section.

13 “(c) **TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS.**—The teacher
14 training programs described in subsection (b) shall—

15 “(1) be conducted during the school year and
16 during the summer months;

17 “(2) train teachers who teach grades kinder-
18 garten through college;

19 “(3) select teachers to become members of a
20 National Writing Project teacher network whose
21 members will conduct writing workshops for other
22 teachers in the area served by each National Writing
23 Project site; and

24 “(4) encourage teachers from all disciplines to
25 participate in such teacher training programs.

1 “(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—

2 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
3 graph (2) or (3) and for purposes of subsection (b),
4 the term ‘Federal share’ means, with respect to the
5 costs of teacher training programs described in sub-
6 section (b), 50 percent of such costs to the con-
7 tractor.

8 “(2) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the
9 provisions of paragraph (1) on a case-by-case basis
10 if the National Advisory Board described in sub-
11 section (e) determines, on the basis of financial
12 need, that such waiver is necessary.

13 “(3) MAXIMUM.—The Federal share of the
14 costs of teacher training programs conducted pursu-
15 ant to subsection (b) may not exceed \$150,000 for
16 any one contractor, or \$300,000 for a statewide pro-
17 gram administered by any one contractor in at least
18 five sites throughout the State.

19 “(e) NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD.—

20 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The National Writing
21 Project shall establish and operate a National Advi-
22 sory Board.

23 “(2) COMPOSITION.—The National Advisory
24 Board established pursuant to paragraph (1) shall
25 consist of—

1 “(A) national educational leaders;

2 “(B) leaders in the field of writing; and

3 “(C) such other individuals as the National
4 Writing Project determines necessary.

5 “(3) DUTIES.—The National Advisory Board
6 established pursuant to paragraph (1) shall—

7 “(A) advise the National Writing Project
8 on national issues related to student writing
9 and the teaching of writing;

10 “(B) review the activities and programs of
11 the National Writing Project; and

12 “(C) support the continued development of
13 the National Writing Project.

14 “(f) EVALUATION.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall con-
16 duct an independent evaluation by grant or contract
17 of the teacher training programs administered pur-
18 suant to this subpart. Such evaluation shall specify
19 the amount of funds expended by the National Writ-
20 ing Project and each contractor receiving assistance
21 under this section for administrative costs. The re-
22 sults of such evaluation shall be made available to
23 the appropriate committees of Congress.

24 “(2) FUNDING LIMITATION.—The Secretary
25 shall reserve not more than \$150,000 from the total

1 amount appropriated pursuant to the authority of
2 subsection (h) for fiscal year 2008 and each of the
3 5 succeeding fiscal years to conduct the evaluation
4 described in paragraph (1).

5 “(g) APPLICATION REVIEW.—

6 “(1) REVIEW BOARD.—The National Writing
7 Project shall establish and operate a National Re-
8 view Board that shall consist of—

9 “(A) leaders in the field of research in
10 writing; and

11 “(B) such other individuals as the Na-
12 tional Writing Project determines necessary.

13 “(2) DUTIES.—The National Review Board
14 shall—

15 “(A) review all applications for assistance
16 under this subsection; and

17 “(B) recommend applications for assist-
18 ance under this subsection for funding by the
19 National Writing Project.

20 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
21 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subpart
22 \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2008 and such sums as may
23 be necessary for each of the 5 succeeding fiscal years.”.

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