

**Washington, D.C.** - Today Rep. David Price (NC-04) delivered a message to Congress and the President on behalf of the North Carolina General Assembly: stop under-funding our schools. The NC House passed a resolution last week (H.B. 1811), sponsored by Rep. Marvin Lucas (D-Spring Lake), that calls on Congress and the President to fulfill their obligations to public education by fully funding No Child Left Behind and other federal education programs. Price hand delivered that resolution to the U.S. Congress today and gave the following remarks:

Mr. Speaker, I am here to deliver a message from the North Carolina General Assembly. It is a bipartisan, nearly unanimous message from our State House: Stop under-funding our schools!

Last week, 52 Republicans joined all voting Democrats in the North Carolina House of Representatives in passing a resolution that, "urges the President of the United States and Congress to make a serious commitment to improving the quality of the nation's public schools by substantially increasing the funding for the No Child Left Behind Act, the Higher Education Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and other education related programs."

This resounding call from both sides of the aisle in my state is a sign that North Carolinians are exasperated with a President and a Congress that refuse to follow through on their commitments. They're simply fed up, Mr. Speaker.

By consistently under-funding NCLB, the federal government has failed to hold up its share of the bargain it made with our schools when NCLB was signed into law four years ago.

In passing the law, the government promised to help improve failing schools by targeting the areas that needed support and providing that assistance. By failing to come through on promised funding, the Administration has thus turned NCLB into a program that punishes our schools instead of supporting them.

Two of the resolution's clauses tell the story more fully:

"Whereas, the federal government has decreased funding to North Carolina for No Child Left Behind in fiscal year 2006 by [almost \$11 million] and overall funding for public education by [almost \$12 million], including a deduction of \$759,012 from programs that serve students with disabilities; and

"Whereas, in addition, the federal government has cut almost \$11 million from postsecondary education programs in North Carolina"

Mr. Speaker, since NCLB was signed into law in 2002, and counting the President's latest budget proposal, the Bush administration and Republican Congress have under-funded this law by some \$55 billion. In fact, the House is expected to debate an appropriations bill for the Department of Education soon that will cut the program by another \$500 million as compared to last year.

And what about other federal education programs? The story is much the same: the government is not fulfilling its promises. Since the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975, the federal government has failed to fully fund the education of children with special needs to the tune of \$217 billion.

And this President and the leadership of this House have dropped the ball on making college more affordable for students and parents. Student loan rates are going up and federal support for aspiring students is stagnant or decreasing while the cost of education continues to rise.

To put this in perspective, our alternative Democratic budget would invest far more in education, smartly and strategically, while at the same time balancing the budget sooner.

Mr. Speaker, North Carolina Schools are no strangers to accountability. The teachers, parents, and administrators in my state want our students to succeed like none other. They are simply asking that our federal government be a reliable partner and live up to its promises of support for the education of our children.

I ask unanimous consent to reprint at this point in the Record House Resolution 1811 from the

North Carolina General Assembly, adopted on July 5, 2006.

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