To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding environmental education, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. SARBANES introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding environmental education, and for other purposes.

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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

4 (a) Short Title.—This Act may be cited as the “No Child Left Inside Act of 2011”.

5 (b) Table of Contents.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Findings.
Sec. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) Environmental education is essential for—

(A) enhancing student learning and problem solving skills, especially in science;

(B) creating responsible and engaged citizens; and

(C) producing graduates who are prepared to address the challenges, adjustments, and opportunities that will be present in the life and the workforce of the 21st century due to threats to human health, economical development, biological diversity, and national security arising from environmental stresses.

(2) Studies documenting the increasing indicators of nature deficit show that time spent out of the classroom for learning during the school day is crit-
ical to the intellectual, emotional, and physical health of children and that providing students with quality opportunities to directly experience the natural world can improve students’ overall readiness to learn and academic performance, as well as self-esteem, personal responsibility, community involvement, personal health (including child obesity issues), and understanding of nature.

(3) Fewer and fewer students are becoming involved in important environmental education courses, classwork, and field investigations as an unintended consequence of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

(4) Hands-on, experience-based environmental education as part of the school curriculum connects children to the natural world, and research supports that time spent outdoors lessens the symptoms of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), reduces stress and aggression, helps children sleep better, and improves physical health.

(5) Environmental education “in the field” as part of the regular school curriculum gets kids outside contributing to healthy lifestyles through outdoor recreation, exercise, play and experience in the
natural world that is critical to helping prevent obe-
sity and address other related health problems.

(6) Environmental education for elementary
and secondary school students is critical as our Na-
tion transitions to a green economy where manufac-
turing workers, as well as architects, engineers,
planners, scientists, business managers, financial ex-
perts, lawyers, entrepreneurs, political leaders, re-
source managers, and others, must be environ-
mentally literate to succeed in a green economy.

(7) Environmental education provides critical
tools for a 21st century workforce by providing stu-
dents with the skills to understand complex environ-
mental issues so they may make informed decisions
in their own lives and find solutions for real world
challenges facing us as a nation. Business leaders
also increasingly believe that an environmentally lit-
erate workforce is critical to their long-term success.
Environmental education helps prepare students for
real world challenges.

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Except as otherwise specifically provided, whenever in
this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms
of an amendment to, or a repeal of, a section or other
 provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to
a section or other provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.).

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) Authorization.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out section 5622(g) and part E of title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012 and each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.

(b) Distribution.—With respect to any amount appropriated under subsection (a) for a fiscal year—

(1) not more than 70 percent of such amount shall be used to carry out section 5622(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 for such fiscal year; and

(2) not less than 30 percent of such amount shall be used to carry out part E of title II of such Act for such fiscal year.

TITLE I—ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PLANS

SEC. 101. DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PLANS.

Part D of title V (20 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:
“Subpart 22—Environmental Literacy Plans

“SEC. 5621. ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PLAN REQUIREMENTS.

“In order for any State educational agency, or a local educational agency served by a State educational agency, to receive grant funds, either directly or through participation in a partnership with a recipient of grant funds, under this subpart or part E of title II, the State educational agency shall meet the requirements regarding an environmental literacy plan under section 5622.

“SEC. 5622. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PLANS.

“(a) Submittion of Plan.—

“(1) In General.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the No Child Left Inside Act of 2011, a State educational agency subject to the requirements of section 5621 shall, in consultation with State environmental agencies and State natural resource agencies, and with input from the public—

“(A) submit an environmental literacy plan for prekindergarten through grade 12 to the Secretary for peer review and approval that will ensure that elementary and secondary school students in the State are environmentally literate; and
“(B) begin the implementation of such plan in the State.

“(2) EXISTING PLANS.—A State may satisfy the requirement of paragraph (1)(A) by submitting to the Secretary for peer review an existing State plan that has been developed in cooperation with a State environmental or natural resource management agency, if such plan complies with this section.

“(b) PLAN OBJECTIVES.—A State environmental literacy plan shall meet the following objectives:

“(1) Prepare students to understand, analyze, and address the major environmental challenges facing the students’ State and the United States.

“(2) Provide field experiences as part of the regular school curriculum and create programs that contribute to healthy lifestyles through outdoor recreation and sound nutrition.

“(3) Create opportunities for enhanced and ongoing professional development for teachers that improves the teachers’—

“(A) environmental subject matter knowledge; and

“(B) pedagogical skills in teaching about environmental issues, including the use of—
“(i) interdisciplinary, field-based, and research-based learning; and

“(ii) innovative technology in the classroom.

“(c) CONTENTS OF PLAN.—A State environmental literacy plan shall include each of the following:

“(1) A description of how the State educational agency will measure the environmental literacy of students, including—

“(A) relevant State academic content standards and content areas regarding environmental education, and courses or subjects where environmental education instruction will be integrated throughout the prekindergarten to grade 12 curriculum; and

“(B) a description of the relationship of the plan to the secondary school graduation requirements of the State.

“(2) A description of programs for professional development for teachers to improve the teachers’—

“(A) environmental subject matter knowledge; and

“(B) pedagogical skills in teaching about environmental issues, including the use of—
“(i) interdisciplinary, field-based, and research-based learning; and
“(ii) innovative technology in the classroom.
“(3) A description of how the State educational agency will implement the plan, including securing funding and other necessary support.
“(d) PLAN UPDATE.—The State environmental literacy plan shall be revised or updated by the State educational agency and submitted to the Secretary not less often than every 5 years or as appropriate to reflect plan modifications.
“(e) PEER REVIEW AND SECRETARIAL APPROVAL.—
The Secretary shall—
“(1) establish a peer review process to assist in the review of State environmental literacy plans;
“(2) appoint individuals to the peer review process who—
“(A) are representative of parents, teachers, State educational agencies, State environmental agencies, State natural resource agencies, local educational agencies, and nongovernmental organizations; and
“(B) are familiar with national environmental issues and the health and educational needs of students;

“(3) include, in the peer review process, appropriate representatives from the Department of Commerce, Department of Interior, Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other appropriate Federal agencies, to provide environmental expertise and background for evaluation of the State environmental literacy plan;

“(4) approve a State environmental literacy plan not later than 120 days after the plan’s submission unless the Secretary determines that the State environmental literacy plan does not meet the requirements of this section;

“(5) immediately notify the State if the Secretary determines that the State environmental literacy plan does not meet the requirements of this section, and state the reasons for such determination;

“(6) not decline to approve a State environmental literacy plan before—

“(A) offering the State an opportunity to revise the State environmental literacy plan;
“(B) providing technical assistance in order to assist the State to meet the requirements of this section; and

“(C) providing notice and an opportunity for a hearing; and

“(7) have the authority to decline to approve a State environmental literacy plan for not meeting the requirements of this part, but shall not have the authority to require a State, as a condition of approval of the State environmental literacy plan, to—

“(A) include in, or delete from, such State environmental literacy plan 1 or more specific elements of the State academic content standards under section 1111(b)(1); or

“(B) use specific academic assessment instruments or items.

“(f) STATE REVISIONS.—The State educational agency shall have the opportunity to revise a State environmental literacy plan if such revision is necessary to satisfy the requirements of this section.

“(g) GRANTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—

“(1) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—From amounts appropriated for this subsection, the Secretary shall award grants, through allotments in accordance with the regulations described in paragraph (2), to States
to enable the States to award subgrants, on a com-
petitive basis, to local educational agencies and eligi-
ble partnerships (as such term is defined in section
2502) to support the implementation of the State
environmental literacy plan.

“(2) Regulations.—The Secretary shall pro-
mulgate regulations implementing the grant pro-
gram under paragraph (1), which regulations shall
include the development of an allotment formula
that best achieves the purposes of this subpart.

“(3) Administrative expenses.—A State re-
ceiving a grant under this subsection may use not
more than 2.5 percent of the grant funds for admin-
istrative expenses.

“(h) Reporting.—

“(1) In general.—Not later than 2 years
after approval of a State environmental literacy
plan, and every 2 years thereafter, the State edu-
cational agency shall submit to the Secretary a re-
port on the implementation of the State plan.

“(2) Report requirements.—The report re-
quired by this subsection shall be—

“(A) in the form specified by the Sec-
retary;
“(B) based on the State’s ongoing evaluation activities; and

“(C) made readily available to the public.”

TITLE II—ESTABLISHMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAMS

SEC. 201. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAMS.

Title II (20 U.S.C. 6601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“PART E—ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAMS

SEC. 2501. PURPOSE.

“The purpose of this part is to ensure the academic achievement of students in environmental literacy through the professional development of teachers and educators.

SEC. 2502. GRANTS FOR ENHANCING EDUCATION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION.

“(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE PARTNERSHIP.—In this section, the term ‘eligible partnership’ means a partnership that—
“(1) shall include a local educational agency; and

“(2) may include—

“(A) the teacher training department of an institution of higher education;

“(B) the environmental department of an institution of higher education;

“(C) another local educational agency, a public charter school, a public elementary school or secondary school, or a consortium of such schools;

“(D) a Federal, State, regional, or local environmental or natural resource management agency that has demonstrated effectiveness in improving the quality of environmental education teachers; or

“(E) a nonprofit organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in improving the quality of environmental education teachers.

“(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

“(1) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—From amounts appropriated for this subsection, the Secretary shall award grants, through allotments in accordance with the regulations described in paragraph (2), to States whose State environmental literacy plan has been
approved under section 5622, to enable the States to award subgrants under subsection (e).

“(2) Regulations.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations implementing the grant program under paragraph (1), which regulations shall include the development of an allotment formula that best achieves the purposes of this subpart.

“(3) Administrative Expenses.—A State receiving a grant under this subsection may use not more than 2.5 percent of the grant funds for administrative expenses.

“(c) Subgrants Authorized.—

“(1) Subgrants to Eligible Partnerships.—From amounts made available to a State educational agency under subsection (b)(1), the State educational agency shall award subgrants, on a competitive basis, to eligible partnerships serving the State, to enable the eligible partnerships to carry out the authorized activities described in subsection (e) consistent with the approved State environmental literacy plan.

“(2) Duration.—The State educational agency shall award each subgrant under this part for a period of not more than 3 years beginning on the date
of approval of the State’s environmental literacy plan under section 5622.

“(3) **Supplement, not supplant.**—Funds provided to an eligible partnership under this part shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, funds that would otherwise be used for activities authorized under this part.

“(d) **Application Requirements.**—

“(1) **In general.**—Each eligible partnership desiring a subgrant under this part shall submit an application to the State educational agency, at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the State educational agency may require.

“(2) **Contents.**—Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) the results of a comprehensive assessment of the teacher quality and professional development needs, with respect to the teaching and learning of environmental content;

“(B) an explanation of how the activities to be carried out by the eligible partnership are expected to improve student academic achievement and strengthen the quality of environmental instruction;
“(C) a description of how the activities to be carried out by the eligible partnership—

“(i) will be aligned with challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards in environmental education, to the extent such standards exist, and with the State’s environmental literacy plan under section 5622; and

“(ii) will advance the teaching of interdisciplinary courses that integrate the study of natural, social, and economic systems and that include strong field components in which students have the opportunity to directly experience nature;

“(D) a description of how the activities to be carried out by the eligible partnership will ensure that teachers are trained in the use of field-based or service learning to enable the teachers—

“(i) to use the local environment and community as a resource; and

“(ii) to enhance student understanding of the environment and academic achievement;
“(E) a description of—

“(i) how the eligible partnership will carry out the authorized activities described in subsection (e); and

“(ii) the eligible partnership’s evaluation and accountability plan described in subsection (f); and

“(F) a description of how the eligible partnership will continue the activities funded under this part after the grant period has expired.

“(e) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—An eligible partnership shall use the subgrant funds provided under this part for 1 or more of the following activities related to elementary schools or secondary schools:

“(1) Creating opportunities for enhanced and ongoing professional development of teachers that improves the environmental subject matter knowledge of such teachers.

“(2) Creating opportunities for enhanced and ongoing professional development of teachers that improves teachers’ pedagogical skills in teaching about the environment and environmental issues, including in the use of—

“(A) interdisciplinary, research-based, and field-based learning; and
“(B) innovative technology in the classroom.

“(3) Establishing and operating environmental education summer workshops or institutes, including follow-up training, for elementary and secondary school teachers to improve their pedagogical skills and subject matter knowledge for the teaching of environmental education.

“(4) Developing or redesigning more rigorous environmental education curricula that—

“(A) are aligned with challenging State academic content standards in environmental education, to the extent such standards exist, and with the State environmental literacy plan under section 5622; and

“(B) advance the teaching of interdisciplinary courses that integrate the study of natural, social, and economic systems and that include strong field components.

“(5) Designing programs to prepare teachers at a school to provide mentoring and professional development to other teachers at such school to improve teacher environmental education subject matter and pedagogical skills.
“(6) Establishing and operating programs to bring teachers into contact with working professionals in environmental fields to expand such teachers’ subject matter knowledge of, and research in, environmental issues.

“(7) Creating initiatives that seek to incorporate environmental education within teacher training programs or accreditation standards consistent with the State environmental literacy plan under section 5622.

“(8) Promoting outdoor environmental education activities as part of the regular school curriculum and schedule in order to further the knowledge and professional development of teachers and help students directly experience nature.

“(f) EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible partnership receiving a subgrant under this part shall develop an evaluation and accountability plan for activities assisted under this part that includes rigorous objectives that measure the impact of the activities.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The plan developed under paragraph (1) shall include measurable objectives to increase the number of teachers who participate in
environmental education content-based professional
development activities.

“(g) REPORT.—Each eligible partnership receiving a
subgrant under this part shall report annually, for each
year of the subgrant, to the State educational agency re-
garding the eligible partnership’s progress in meeting the
objectives described in the accountability plan of the eligi-
ble partnership under subsection (f).”.

TITLE III—ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION GRANT PRO-
GRAM TO HELP BUILD NA-
TIONAL CAPACITY

SEC. 301. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM
TO HELP BUILD NATIONAL CAPACITY.

Part D of title V (20 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.) (as amend-
ed by section 101) is further amended by adding at the
end the following:

“Subpart 23—Environmental Education Grant
Program

“SEC. 5631. PURPOSES.

“The purposes of this subpart are—

“(1) to prepare children to understand and ad-
dress major environmental challenges facing the
United States; and
“(2) to strengthen environmental education as an integral part of the elementary school and secondary school curriculum.

“SEC. 5632. GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

“(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE PARTNERSHIP.—In this section, the term ‘eligible partnership’ means a partnership that—

“(1) shall include a local educational agency; and

“(2) may include—

“(A) the teacher training department of an institution of higher education;

“(B) the environmental department of an institution of higher education;

“(C) another local educational agency, a public charter school, a public elementary school or secondary school, or a consortium of such schools;

“(D) a Federal, State, regional, or local environmental or natural resource management agency, or park and recreation department, that has demonstrated effectiveness, expertise, and experience in the development of the institutional, financial, intellectual, or policy resources needed to help the field of environ-
mental education become more effective and widely practiced; and

“(E) a nonprofit organization that has demonstrated effectiveness, expertise, and experience in the development of the institutional, financial, intellectual, or policy resources needed to help the field of environmental education become more effective and widely practiced.

“(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible partnerships to enable the eligible partnerships to pay the Federal share of the costs of activities under this subpart.

“(2) DURATION.—Each grant under this subpart shall be for a period of not less than 1 year and not more than 3 years.

“SEC. 5633. APPLICATIONS.

“Each eligible partnership desiring a grant under this subpart shall submit to the Secretary an application that contains—

“(1) a plan to initiate, expand, or improve environmental education programs in order to make progress toward meeting—
“(A) challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards in environmental education, to the extent such standards exist; and

“(B) academic standards that are aligned with the State’s environmental literacy plan under section 5622; and

“(2) an evaluation and accountability plan for activities assisted under this subpart that includes rigorous objectives that measure the impact of activities funded under this subpart.

**SEC. 5634. USE OF FUNDS.**

“Grant funds made available under this subpart shall be used for 1 or more of the following:

“(1) Developing and implementing State curriculum frameworks for environmental education that meet—

“(A) challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards for environmental education, to the extent such standards exist; and

“(B) academic standards that are aligned with the State’s environmental literacy plan under section 5622.
“(2) Replicating or disseminating information about proven and tested model environmental education programs that—

“(A) use the environment as an integrating theme or content throughout the curriculum; or

“(B) provide integrated, interdisciplinary instruction about natural, social, and economic systems along with field experience that provides students with opportunities to directly experience nature in ways designed to improve students’ overall academic performance, personal health (including addressing child obesity issues), and understanding of nature.

“(3) Developing and implementing new approaches to advancing environmental education and the adoption and use of environmental content standards at the State and local levels.

“SEC. 5635. REPORTS.

“(a) ELIGIBLE PARTNERSHIP REPORT.—In order to continue receiving grant funds under this subpart after the first year of a multiyear grant under this subpart, the eligible partnership shall submit to the Secretary an annual report that—
“(1) describes the activities assisted under this subpart that were conducted during the preceding year;

“(2) demonstrates that progress has been made in helping schools to meet the State academic standards for environmental education described in section 5634(1); and

“(3) describes the results of the eligible partnership’s evaluation and accountability plan.

“(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the No Child Left Inside Act of 2011 and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress that—

“(1) describes the programs assisted under this subpart;

“(2) documents the success of such programs in improving national and State environmental education capacity; and

“(3) makes such recommendations as the Secretary determines appropriate for the continuation and improvement of the programs assisted under this subpart.

“SEC. 5636. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.

“(a) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of a grant under this subpart shall not exceed—
“(1) 90 percent of the total costs of the activities assisted under the grant for the first year for which the program receives assistance under this subpart; and

“(2) 75 percent of such costs for each of the second and third years.

“(b) Administrative Expenses.—Not more than 7.5 percent of the grant funds made available to an eligible partnership under this subpart for any fiscal year may be used for administrative expenses.

“(c) Availability of Funds.—Amounts made available to the Secretary to carry out this subpart shall remain available until expended.

“SEC. 5637. SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.

“Funds made available under this subpart shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, any other Federal, State, or local funds available for environmental education activities.”.