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**KENNEDY STATEMENT ON FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND
ACT**

Four years ago, Democrats worked with President Bush to adopt the No Child Left Behind Act, to create a new, national commitment to public education, based on two central goals: supporting the improvement of America's schools and requiring accountability for results in learning.

These are still the right goals for our schools, but the sad story on No Child Left Behind is promises unfulfilled.

Teachers, principals and parents are doing their part, but the Bush Administration has failed to do its part to provide the resources needed to fully implement these reforms.

Thanks to hard work in our schools under difficult circumstances, we've seen some encouraging results. Student achievement is up in 73 percent of the states across the country. Significant gains are being made in math in our urban schools, and some states like Illinois and Minnesota are making great strides toward closing achievement gaps. The law has focused more attention on the neediest students, and prompted more collaboration between teachers to get the job done.

We recognized when the law was passed that resources would be critical to carry the bold plan to leave no child behind to every school in America, and Congress promised significant increases in funding each year to get the job done. Unfortunately, President Bush still doesn't realize that No Child Left Behind was a promise, not a political slogan.

Over the past four years, the White House and this Republican Congress have shortchanged funding for the law to the tune of \$40 billion. The Republican budget bill that passed just before the holidays actually cuts funding for the law by \$1 billion. That means more than 3 million disadvantaged children will be left behind in our public schools and over 1.6 million children will be left out of after-school programs at a time when districts are being asked to take on the challenges of meeting new standards in science, implementing new annual tests, and turning around the performance of thousands of low-achieving schools.

This Administration still hasn't learned the important lesson that we cannot reform America's schools on a tin cup budget. It's time for President Bush to provide the resources needed to make No Child Left Behind a genuine reality, rather than a broken promise.

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