

GROWING & STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S MIDDLE CLASS

21ST CENTURY GREEN HIGH- PERFORMING PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES ACT



**Great Seneca Creek Elementary School
Germantown, MD**
Photographer: Ken Wyner

110TH CONGRESS

**THE HONORABLE GEORGE MILLER
CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

May 2008

21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act

School buildings should be safe, healthy and modern learning environments for children. But according to recent estimates, America's schools are hundreds of billions of dollars short of the funding needed to ensure that every child attends a high-quality facility. Meanwhile, research shows a correlation between school facility quality and student achievement and teacher retention. Despite the need to modernize school buildings, since 2001 the federal government has provided almost no direct aid to help states and schools pay for school construction and repair. Modernizing school buildings would also create jobs in the construction industry, one of the industries hit hardest by the recent economic downturn – having lost 457,000 jobs since September 2006. And by helping local school districts create schools that are more energy efficient and more reliant on renewable sources of energy, we can greatly reduce the emissions that contribute to global warming.



**Homewood Middle School
Birmingham, AL**
*Photographer: Giattina Aycock
Architecture Studio*

"Modern, more efficient and better schools will improve the learning environment for students, enhance the workplace for students, teachers and school administrators and most importantly they will advance student achievement in urban, rural and suburban communities in every state."

***-- Robert P. Canavan, Chair
Rebuild America's Schools***

"The measure includes provisions to ensure that federal assistance reaches the local level quickly and with the least amount of bureaucracy and red-tape, especially important at a time when districts are faced with difficult spending decisions..."

***-- Michael D. Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City
Schools***

Improving Education, Strengthening the Economy, Fighting Global Warming

The 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act, passed by the Committee on April 30 by a bipartisan vote of 28-19:

- ✓ **Provides schools with funding for modernization, renovation and repair projects.**
 - Authorizes \$6.4 billion for fiscal year 2009, and ensures that school districts will quickly receive these funds for school modernization, renovation, and repair projects that improve the teaching and learning climate, student and teacher health and safety, and energy efficiency.
 - Allocates the same percentage of funds to states and school districts that they receive under Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, except that no such district will receive less than \$5,000.

- ✓ **Encourages energy efficiency and the use of renewable resources in schools.**
 - Calls for school districts to use funds to meet one of three widely recognized green building standards or equivalent state or local standards.
 - Provides states with funding to develop a plan to create a statewide database of schools' facilities, modernization and repair needs, energy use, carbon footprint, and a school energy efficiency quality plan.
 - Allows school districts to waive the green building standards where circumstances make them impracticable, but ensures that at least 90 percent of funds will be used for green projects by 2013.

- Requires school districts to publicly report the educational, energy and environmental benefits of projects, how they meet green building standards, and the percentage of funds used at low-income and rural schools.
- Requires the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, to create a database of the best practices in school construction and to provide technical assistance to states and school districts regarding best practices.



**Lansing Memorial Junior High School
Lansing, IL**

Photographer: Judi Caddick

- ✓ **Provides additional aid to Gulf Coast schools still recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.**
 - Authorizes separate funds – half a billion dollars over five years – for public schools that were damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

- ✓ **Ensures fair wages and benefits for workers, and higher quality work, by applying Davis-Bacon protections to all grants under the Act.**



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